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R E P O R T

ON A

UNION OF CHURCHES

FOR

BENEVOLENT PURPOSES,

READ AND ACCEPTED

AT

A MEETING HELD APRIL 27, 1834,

Benevolent fraternity of churches



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BOSTON, APRIL 3, 1834.

A MEETING of gentlemen called together by the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association was held this evening at the Berry Street Vestry.

WILLIAM SIMMONS, Esq. was chosen Chairman, and
GEORGE A. SAMPSON, Secretary.

The object of the meeting, as stated by the Rev. HENRY WARE, Jr., was to consider the subject of benevolent efforts for the poor in this city, with special reference to the Ministry at large, which needed to be placed on a more permanent footing than it is at present.

The views of gentlemen on this subject were called for, and an interesting discussion ensued, which resulted in passing the following vote:—

Voted, That a Committee be appointed to digest a plan for a systematic organization for the moral and religious improvement of the poor in this city.

The following gentlemen were chosen;—

REV. EZRA S. GANNETT,
REV. GEORGE RIPLEY,
HON. PETER O. THACHER,
MR SAMUEL DORR,
MR ELIJAH COBB.

The Committee were instructed to call a meeting when they should be ready to report, at such time and in such manner as they should think best.

Adjourned.

BOSTON, APRIL 27, 1834.

An adjourned meeting was held at the Hall of the Athenæum this evening, which was numerously attended.

Judge SIMMONS being prevented from attending by illness, Hon. PETER O. THACHER was chosen to preside. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. ALEXANDER YOUNG.

A Report was then read by the Chairman of the Committee appointed at the last meeting, and after a full discussion of the subjects embraced in the report, it was unanimously adopted.

On motion of Rev. GEORGE RIPLEY, it was

Voted, That in the opinion of this meeting it is highly desirable that the plan of a Fraternity of Churches, set forth in the Report of the Committee, should be carried into immediate effect in our several congregations.

Voted, That a Committee of five be appointed, to take all necessary measures to complete the proposed organization.

On motion of Mr GEORGE BOND, it was

Voted, That the same gentlemen who had prepared the Report, constitute the Committee proposed in the last resolution.

On motion of Rev. JOHN PIERPONT, it was

Voted, That the Committee who have been charged with carrying into effect the plan of action proposed in the Report, be authorized to have the report printed and distributed in the several congregations.

The meeting was then dissolved.

GEORGE A. SAMPSON, *Secretary*.

R E P O R T .

THE Committee appointed at the Berry Street Vestry on the 3d instant, beg leave to report,

That upon considering the nature of the objects which were brought under their notice, as well as the means by which those objects might be secured, they deemed it proper to exercise very freely the power of invitation to the present meeting with which they were intrusted. Believing that in the adoption of a plan which proposed general concurrence there should be a common intelligence and sympathy, they requested the minister or preacher for the day in each of the congregations which they hoped to include in this union, to give notice of the present meeting from the pulpit, and to invite all the male members to attend. Having in this way obtained a representation from all the churches, they now proceed to lay before the meeting the result of their deliberations.

Two subjects, closely connected indeed, and one even embraced within the other, seemed to the Committee to require their attention. The support of the Ministry at large was the immediate object of their inquiries; yet they could not but regard with a still more anxious sense

of its importance the encouragement of a truly Christian benevolence in the bosom of this community. To them it seems, that the spirit of Jesus Christ is but partially understood and feebly exemplified among us. This spirit is the glory of our religion; and until it fills our souls, we realize but a portion of the benefits which Christ came to bestow upon every one of his disciples. This spirit is love,—a love which embraces man of every name and condition, and which thinks, not that its duty is overlooked, but that its privilege is neglected, so long as any good which it might do to a human being is left undone. A Christian community therefore should be distinguished by its practical philanthropy. Its sympathies, energies and resources should be given to those who are in want of the blessings which it can bestow. If our benevolence be measured by this rule, it will appear defective. There are in this city thousands, many thousands of our fellow-creatures, who are destitute of the instructions and benefits of religion. Living in the midst of Christian institutions and influences, they are in fact strangers to them. They have no place of worship, no religious teacher, no Christian friend, no sacred associations. Their moral sentiments are not cultivated, their spiritual natures are bound in darkness and torpor. They do not know themselves; they do not know the Saviour, who died to raise such as they to a new life; they do not know the Heavenly Father, whose sunshine is on their daily paths, and whose mercy is waiting to be gracious to their souls. Some of these our fellow-citizens, our neighbors, who breathe the same air and walk the same streets with us, are vicious, depraved, hardened, the slaves of evil passions and vile

habits. Others are only ignorant and careless of everything but the supply of their immediate wants. Some have lived for years in neglect, till their characters are formed, if characters they can be said to have. Others are growing up into an imitation of their recklessness and wickedness. But none are unsusceptible of influence. They may be addressed, reclaimed, enlightened, sanctified, and made happy Christians. To this end they must be remembered, thought of, sought after, visited, treated with kindness, assisted in the work of self-elevation, provided with means of improvement, and encouraged to do better and better. They who have enjoyed greater advantages, who through the Providence of God or the right direction of their own efforts are possessors of blessings to which these are strangers, must be almoners of Heaven's best gifts — truth and love. To them is committed a glorious trust, the origin of a weighty responsibility. They should feel this responsibility, that they may discharge the trust.

Now it seems to the Committee that this sense of duty and privilege is not as strong as it should be, and therefore, and of course, that this office of Christian beneficence is not executed. There is much charity in our city, much alms-giving and much wise provision both for the physical and the moral necessities of those to whom wealth and education have been denied. Still there remains all the vice and ignorance and want which we have described ; and which can certainly be relieved, if it cannot be wholly removed. The congregations to which we belong include a large number of the opulent and enlightened families of Boston ; and the vast majority of the worshippers in these congregations possess the means,

not of comfortable subsistence only, but of liberal contribution to any object which shall commend itself to their sympathies ; while none are so poor that they may not give time and influence to a good work.

In devising any scheme by which the neglected or depressed, the ignorant and vicious classes of the community may be lifted into an equal participation of religious privileges with their brethren, it seems to the Committee that no attempt should be made to enlist Christians of other denominations. This principle they adopt, from no sectarian prejudice nor from a desire to strengthen the walls of division, but from a conviction that we can best accomplish our design by acting separately. In many philanthropic enterprises Christians of every name may coöperate both in substance and in form. But when we wish to establish the rightful dominion of Christian truths over the minds and hearts of men, we cripple our ability by seeking the concurrence of those whose views of man's nature and of Christ's teaching are widely different from our own. They pursue their paths of usefulness. They are engaged in the same benevolent purpose which we contemplate, and we wish them abundant success. But they prefer to take their own course, to adopt their own methods, to inculcate their own opinions. It is best that they should act independently of us, and it is best that we should act independently of them ; for then we may secure harmony and mutual respect, which would be endangered by an attempt to control each other.

For the reasons which they have now given the Committee think that means should be taken to foster within and among the churches represented in this meeting a

spirit of Christian benevolence, and to afford this spirit opportunities of expression and action.

In endeavoring to combine the energies of our several congregations and direct them to such a result, it is plain that no advantage can be taken of their corporate existence. By law they are recognised as associations for particular ends, viz. the support of the Christian ministry by each within itself, and the decent maintenance of Christian worship for its own benefit. No tax or assessment for any other object would be legal.

In any concert which may be proposed the independence of our several churches moreover should be scrupulously regarded. This is the corner-stone of Congregationalism, and the safeguard of our religious liberty. Each congregation, being competent, according to the theory of our church-order, to manage its own affairs, should permit no other congregation or association of churches or body of men, ministers or laymen, to manage them in its stead. Every method of consentaneous action should therefore proceed on the principle of this independence, neither curtailing, compromising, nor endangering it. Still there are objects of a general nature which can best be promoted by such a concentration of effort and such an organization of movement, as would bring neither hindrance nor peril to the fundamental principle of our ecclesiastical establishments. It becomes the Christian people of Boston to diminish, if possible,—and that it is possible no one can doubt,—the sin and wretchedness that prevail in the less favored classes of society. Our city is the place on which our solicitude and labor should be bestowed. Every one may do something for its improvement, and should do what he can in

his individual capacity. But who is so dull an observer, that he has not learned that much may be done by combined sympathies which could never be effected by single-handed beneficence ?

The modes in which the philanthropic spirit shall manifest itself must be revealed by time. Let this spirit be cherished and it will discover the channels by which it may distribute its blessings. One mode has recommended itself to general approbation by the trial which has been made of its value. The Ministry at large which was commenced by Dr Tuckerman, and has since called into conjunction with his labors those of Mr Barnard, and recently of Mr Gray, is admitted by all who have known anything of its results to be a source of good alike to the rich and to the poor. The experiment has been fairly tried, and an opinion upon its merits may now be formed without the risk of premature judgment. It has been proved, as this Committee think, to be an institution worthy of liberal and permanent encouragement. It should be placed on a secure basis, and be incorporated among the durable institutions of the city. Hitherto it has been supported by voluntary subscriptions, of such a nature that they could not be said to afford a stable ground of reliance. Its establishment is one of the services which the American Unitarian Association has rendered to the cause of religion, and it has always been under the care of that Association. The means of its support have been drawn from the members of our congregations, principally by annual payments from ladies. The amount contributed has been sufficient, because the Ministers have been content to receive inadequate salaries. But the injustice of asking

them to continue their labors year after year with so small a compensation is obvious. It is also desirable, nay, essential to the full efficacy of this institution, that the number of ministers should be increased. Three if not four might find full employment without taking work out of the hands of any who are engaged in similar service under the patronage of other denominations.

The annual expense of supporting such a ministry under ordinary circumstances ought not to be estimated at less than three thousand dollars; which sum would be expended in the payment of salaries, in the support of public worship and of Sunday schools, and for other kindred objects. The Committee wish it to be distinctly understood that none of their suggestions have reference to the physical wants of the poor. They do not wish to add another to the eleemosynary institutions of the city, to which the poor might resort either for the supply of the comforts or for the relief of the necessities which belong to their bodily condition. They wish to provide instruction and solace for their souls. The ministers to the poor have already experienced so much hindrance to the discharge of their appropriate functions from the frequent applications for assistance, which they find it difficult to resist, yet to which they ought not to be made subject, that they are anxious to leave the distribution of charity to those whom the public or our Benevolent Societies have designated for this office. In all that is contemplated in this Report, it is the spiritual wants of the needy to which alone we are looking. And in doing our part towards the alleviation of these wants much more than three thousand dollars might be judi-

ciously expended, as other means of benefit besides the Ministry at large would claim our attention. At present two thousand dollars might be named as the amount which it would be necessary to raise.

The time then has come, when a much larger sum is needed than has been required for the support of this ministry, and when it ought to be placed upon a secure and permanent foundation. The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, it is understood, are willing to relinquish their oversight, if a preferable arrangement can be adopted. It may be proper to state for the information of some who are not acquainted with the origin of this meeting, that it is held by adjournment from the Berry Street Vestry, where on the evening of Fast-day, the 3d instant, several gentlemen assembled, by invitation from the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, to consider the subjects to which this Report relates. The idea of relieving the Executive Committee of the care of the Ministry at large did therefore originate with themselves. It was a question carefully weighed by the Committee in preparing this Report, whether the connexion between the American Unitarian Association and the Ministry at large should be dissolved. They felt that the part which the Association took in the establishment of this ministry, and the judicious care with which it has watched over its interests, entitled it to consideration in arranging any plan for the future. But they also saw reasons which seemed to them conclusive against the continuance of this connexion. The Unitarian Association embraces within its view the people and the wants of the whole United States ; the Ministry in this city is a local object. The

Association is actively engaged in disseminating opinions; the Ministry will aim exclusively at moral results. Many persons in our congregations withhold their support from the Association through a fear that it is or may become an instrument of sectarianism; we desire that every attendant on our worship in the city should coöperate for the moral advancement of this community. And finally, the duties of the Executive Committee of the Association are sufficiently great without imposing on them an increase of cares or labors. These reasons appeared to justify a separation of the Ministry from the American Unitarian Association.

The Committee who offer this Report have been anxious to present a plan which should secure both the ends to which their attention was drawn,—the culture and development of a philanthropic spirit, and the establishment of the Ministry at large on a proper basis. The latter, as they have intimated, is a natural result of the former, but is pressed by circumstances upon immediate consideration.

While they have desired to propose an effective organization, they have wished to avoid the creation of any more offices than were necessary, and to maintain as far as possible our present modes of action. They offer a plan by which our congregations will be united for the general purpose of imparting moral benefit to the poor, to the ignorant, and to the vicious of this city; but which will leave much to the separate action of each. This plan proposes that each congregation shall virtually become a philanthropic association, but the way in which it shall assume such a character is left to be determined by the members of the respective congrega-

tions. It seems to the Committee important that all the worshippers in our churches, of both sexes, should be interested and should give their support as to a common object.

When the several congregations shall have adopted such an organization as they shall judge best, they can be brought into union and concert by the further execution of the plan which the Committee beg leave now to present. In view of the character and design of this plan, they have given to the whole arrangement which they recommend the title of

THE BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES, which may be described as follows.

1. The object of this Fraternity shall be the improvement of the moral state of the poor and irreligious of this city, by the support of the Ministry at large, and by other means.

2. Each congregation shall constitute itself, or shall create within itself, a Benevolent Association, in such manner as its members shall deem best, acting on the principle of as general coöperation as possible.

3. Each association thus formed shall annually choose five delegates, who shall be the channel of communication between their respective congregations and the Executive Committee named below.

4. These delegates shall together constitute a Central Board, who shall meet quarterly, and at other times if requested by the Executive Committee.

5. The Central Board shall choose a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and two others, who shall together form an Executive Committee.

6. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to devise, mature and execute measures by which the object of the Fraternity may be advanced, and in all cases in which it shall seem to them necessary, they shall ask the advice and coöperation of the Central Board.

7. Any measure may originate either in the Executive Committee, in the Central Board, or in any one of the congregations.

8. Whenever it shall appear to the Central Board necessary or proper to procure action in the churches upon any subject, the delegates at the Board shall lay it before their several congregations, and report the result to the Executive Committee, whose proceedings shall be governed by the information which they may receive.

9. The real power of control will therefore be in the congregations organized as is proposed in the 2d Article, while the Central Board will possess an advisory power over the Committee, with whom the accomplishment of any measure will rest.

The execution of this plan, it is believed, will be found practicable and easy. Its details involve no confusion, and have been arranged with as close an adherence to simplicity as was consistent with the preservation of the two essential principles, of congregational independence and general concert. The only difficulty that is apprehended lies in the reluctance of the right men to assume the responsibility and labor of a new enterprise, when they are already burthened with duties. But it is true alike of society and of individuals, that "where there is a

will, there is a way." The Executive Committee should be composed of intelligent, judicious, benevolent, active, and industrious men. This description may raise a feeling of discouragement; but are there not many such men in all our congregations? And the Committee cannot doubt that if the plan which they have now laid before the meeting, or any other better suited to accomplish the desired end, should obtain the approbation of such men, it will command their services as they shall be needed. The requisition for labor and time on any except the Executive Committee will appear light, when it is remembered that, as the members of the several associations belong to our congregations, they may be notified and assembled on Sunday — a day free from secular cares, and particularly suited to this object, and which it would be a great good to appropriate together with the uses of Christian worship to benevolent and religious effort.

The Committee would offer one other suggestion. It has occurred to them, that Fast-day might be used to promote the interests of the Fraternity, and be redeemed from its present doubtful character to purposes of beneficence. They would propose that the annual choice of delegates with whatever other business might come before an annual meeting be assigned to the afternoon of that day; and in the evening it might be well to have a general meeting of the Fraternity, when by a sermon or a discussion its purposes might be still further recommended to the regards of the people, and our congregations be united by a closer and closer sympathy. To this suggestion they do not wish to ascribe great importance, as there may be difficulties of which they are not

aware and its adoption would be only incidental to the plan which they have proposed.

All which is respectfully submitted.

EZRA S. GANNETT,	}	COMMITTEE.
GEORGE RIPLEY,		
PETER O. THACHER,		
SAMUEL DORR,		
ELIJAH COBB.		

BOSTON, APRIL 23, 1834.

THE Churches represented at the meeting before which this Report was read, and contemplated to be included within the Fraternity, are these thirteen, viz.

First Church, Chauncy Place.

Second Church, Hanover Street.

King's Chapel Church, School Street.

Church in Brattle Square.

New North Church, Hanover Street.

New South Church, Summer Street.

Federal Street Church.

Hollis Street Church.

West Church, Lynde Street.

Twelfth Congregational Church, Chambers Street.

Purchase Street Church.

South Congregational Church, Washington Street.

Hawes Place Church, South Boston.

THE Committee who were instructed by the meeting which accepted the preceding Report "to take all necessary measures to complete the proposed organization," believe they shall not pass the bounds of propriety or delicacy in offering one or two suggestions that may facilitate the action of the congregations on the subject. It seems to them important that this action should be as prompt and general as possible, and they hope that before the close of the present month the whole arrangement may be completed. They also think that the organization would be more simple and effective, if its parts should bear a close resemblance to each other. They would therefore, without infringing on the principle laid down in the Report, that "the way in which each congregation shall assume the character of a philanthropic association must be left to be determined by its members," venture to propose a form of parochial organization which might be universally adopted.

They suggest in the first place, that a meeting of each congregation should be held on the second Sunday in this month, or on as early a Sunday as may be convenient, to consider the subject of the Report.

At this meeting they hope that, after all necessary discussion and a full understanding of the contemplated measures, it will be voted to concur in their adoption, and to proceed immediately to make the arrangements that should follow such a vote.

These arrangements might be as follows :—

1. An association shall be formed by voluntary subscription, under the title of THE BRANCH OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES,—(inserting the
name of the religious Society.)
2. Every member of this congregation, of either sex, who shall pay an annual subscription of any amount shall be considered a member of this Branch.
3. The officers shall be a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such others as the members shall think best to appoint.
4. At the first election of officers and at each subsequent annual election five delegates to the Central Board shall be chosen, of whom the President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Branch shall be three, and who shall have power to fill any vacancy which may occur in their own number between any two elections.
5. The annual meeting of the Branch shall be held on Fast-day.
6. The Officers and Delegates chosen this year shall continue in office till the next annual meeting.
7. Each Branch shall make its own by-laws.

As soon as the Committee who take the liberty of offering these suggestions shall receive information of the choice of delegates in the congregations, they will call a meeting of the Central Board, that it may be organized as proposed in the Report, after which they will have executed the service entrusted to them, and “the proposed organization will have been completed.”

BOSTON, MAY 1, 1834.

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Mrs. Jenks.

FIRST

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MINISTERS-AT-LARGE

TO THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.



B O S T O N .

1835.

TUTTLE AND WEEKS, PRINTERS,
No. 8, School Street.

R E P O R T .

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BENEVOLENT
FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

GENTLEMEN,

In compliance with your request, we would lay before you the following Report upon various objects connected with our Ministry.

1. The Office of the Visitors of the Poor is continued open under the Savings Bank, Tremont Street. We have found it of great service in advancing many of our plans. The records have received many important items, and they have often been consulted for the sake of what they already contain. Various Benevolent Societies of the city continue to send delegates to a monthly meeting at the Office, at which reports of their proceedings are made, and the interchange of light and experience is kept up. This measure promises to be of incalculable good. We have already been thus brought into a connexion with almost every Benevolent Association of the city, by which we have become possessed of a large amount of information. Our brethren of other denominations engaged in the Ministry at large meet constantly, to take charge with us of the cases referred,

by the tickets or otherwise, to the Office. Should assistance appear to be needed, application is then made to the Overseers of the Poor, the Directors of the House of Industry, the various Benevolent Societies, as circumstances may dictate; Dispensary advice, or medicines are easily procured for the applicants; private resources of charity can be applied to, should such be most suitable; children are at once directed to the schools, placed at service, or provided with an asylum, should they require it; while at the same time our colleagues and we rejoice to hold ourselves ready to minister to the spiritual and eternal wants of the erring, the despondent, the suffering, the sinful, the penitent, and the dying. Should a few years, under the Providence of God, be permitted to add permanency to these arrangements, there are no good results which may not be anticipated.

The Catholic poor have generally been embraced in the benevolent action of the city, both public and private, on equal terms with the Protestant poor. It is highly desirable that there should however be employed among them a number of Ministers at large of their own denomination. No one but a Catholic clergyman can be expected to have that acquaintance with them, and influence over them, which are indispensable in every well directed endeavor to improve their condition. We have heard with pleasure that three priests have been appointed by the Bishop to take charge of as many districts of the city, with particular reference to the situation and wants of the poor of their communion. This step may be made of great service. The Catholic can thus be directed at once to those who will understand perfectly his claims and character, and who have it as

their charge to attend to all his reasonable wants. Should the design be carried out, it will so approve itself to all in our community, that a request or recommendation from the priests thus employed will always avail to secure all the assistance that any case may need beyond the limits of the church's own resources. Both societies and individuals will be willing to coöperate, be their creed or name what it may, with the enlightened and judicious friend of the Catholic poor, and will aid him freely in removing or preventing distress.

2. Your communication to us of the 17th of November conveyed a request that we should "investigate the state of the colored population of this city in respect to the means of moral and religious instruction." We have all visited occasionally among this class of persons. Since Dr Tuckerman's return from Europe he has paid particular attention to them. The following statements embrace the more prominent points that he has been led to notice. For the colored population of the city, by the last census amounting to eighteen hundred and seventy-five, there is one grammar school in Belknap Street, of which Mr Forbes, a white man, and a zealous friend of colored men, is the master. The school contains nearly an equal number of boys and girls, about one hundred and thirty in all. A new building for this school is now in progress, which will be large enough to receive as many pupils as the colored population will send to it. This is situated in front of the African church, in the basement of which the school has long been, and is still kept. There are three primary schools for colored children, well filled with pupils, and under the charge of most respectable and competent teachers. There is one infant school,

which however is not very well attended. It deserves far more attention than it has received as yet. There are three places of public worship. Mr Gooch, a white man, of the Baptist persuasion, officiates in the church in Belknap Street, and is greatly beloved by his flock. Mr Snowden, a black man, has a considerable congregation which assembles in a church in May Street, and belongs to the Episcopal Methodist order. Messrs Runley and White, white men, preach to a congregation of Dissenting Methodists at a small chapel in West Centre Street. There are Sunday schools connected with these churches. And there appears little demand for more ample accommodations, either for the children or their parents. Visitors to go among the various families, with a view to elevate and improve character, to foster a regard for religious worship, to look especially after the children, would be able to effect great good. All the congregations might be increased, and both the common and the Sunday schools be better filled. Something undoubtedly ought to be done to secure a more reasonable compensation to the preachers now employed than, we are sorry to say, they receive. Rev. Mr Gooch is obliged to eke out the small salary his congregation give him by following his trade as a cooper. This of course must interrupt greatly, or wholly prevent, his pastoral connexion with them. Mr Snowden is a very worthy and useful man. His means of living are very small. He devotes himself however entirely to his work.

The colored population have a lyceum, the meetings of which are said to be well attended. There is also a school for adults among them, conducted by a colored man. No additional means of improving character and

condition among this class of our citizens would be more important, perhaps, than the establishment among them of a school for instruction in sewing. It might be opened on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. With well qualified teachers, and by receiving female adults, as well as children, it would no doubt save many from pauperism and crime. A married woman who knows not the use of the needle soon becomes comparatively a degraded being. A woman who can make her own clothes, and the clothes of her husband and children, will do as much by her industry and providence for the support and respectability of her family, as even her husband, supposing him to be an industrious, honest, and temperate man, and in full employ, can do for their independence. We hope, therefore, to be able to establish one or two sewing schools. Such schools may, probably, in part be supported by small payments made by some of the pupils. But they must, for a time at least, and to a great extent, be charity schools. There are several such schools already open in the city for white children, which prove successful. They would be still more so among the colored girls ; for they are comparatively much less accustomed to plain sewing and the use of the needle.

3. The Sunday school in Hollis Street and that in Friend Street are in a pleasing condition. The children under Mr Barnard's care continue to be connected with those of the Hollis Street Parish. The whole school embraces about three hundred children. The highest attendance has been two hundred and fiftynine. Mr Oliver Everett assists in the superintendence. There are thirtythree female teachers, fifteen male ; and three librarians. All the younger portion of the pupils are

gathered in a separate school, conducted by able teachers somewhat upon the infant school plan, with a view to prepare the children to enter subsequently the classes of the older school. It has not been thought advisable to separate this school, on the ground that some of the children are poor, or do not belong to any particular place of worship, and that the rest are in better circumstances, or attached with their parents to the Hollis Street Society. The union of children from all classes and walks of society, as far as it takes place in the school under its present form, we cannot but earnestly desire to maintain. If the rich and poor are ever to be brought together, it certainly must be in their years of childhood, and on the high and holy ground of religious instruction.

The Howard Sunday school connected with the Friend Street Chapel is at present well attended; and both teachers and pupils are as much interested as at any former period. There are at present over two hundred children belonging to the school, and thirtynine teachers — twentyfive ladies and fourteen gentlemen, — and the average attendance of the children is from one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty. There is a sewing circle connected with the school, composed of ladies, who meet every month for the purpose of supplying the most destitute children with clothing. The visits made by the committee from this circle, which is chosen monthly, have been the means in a great measure of continuing a large number in the school, and of awakening in parents a deeper interest in its success and prosperity.

In regard to the establishment of any more Sunday

schools we would state our opinion that one would be desirable in the neighborhood of the Franklin school-house at the South end. There is no Sunday school farther south than that assembled in the Rev. Mr. Motte's church. The population at this part of the city is rapidly extending, especially in newly-formed and increasing families. More ample accommodations for the religious instruction of the children are indeed indispensable. A room could easily be procured, and your committee, as we learn, is ready to give all other aid. Nothing effectual however can be done till a suitable superintendent shall be found to collect and take charge of the children. Let us hope that the statement of the want will call some one into the field.

Other schools might also be established in various quarters of the city with good effect. We cannot yet decide what localities should be assigned them. We shall bear the subject constantly in mind.

4. Religious services appropriate to children are still continued, morning and afternoon, at the Friend Street chapel. There are generally from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty children present. Many of the parents attend with the children, and seem much pleased; in the visits to them, they often speak of their children's interest in these services. Though we may not have accomplished all that we could wish, and cannot present to view all we could desire, yet we have had much to encourage us; and have become each Sabbath more and more impressed with the importance of these services and the good that may result from them. Certain it is, that many who attend would go nowhere else; and increasing as is the population in the vicinity of the

chapel, many will be gradually brought in, and become interested in it, (as has been already the case in a number of instances,) of those who would be spending the hours of the Sabbath on the wharves in the vicinity, or be seen collected at the corners of the streets during the hours of divine service, to the great annoyance of the neighbors and those passing. The field for usefulness in this respect is great, and it is to be hoped, that the plain and simple manner adopted of illustrating religious truth may in some cases produce that happy result, which is so earnestly to be desired. That the instruction is not entirely lost, we have had some pleasing evidence of late, in finding that an influence had been exerted which was unnoticed and little expected at the time. We cannot here but acknowledge the kind and valuable assistance rendered by several gentlemen, who have cheerfully aided in those services in a way that has proved exceedingly interesting to the children, and lightened the duty of the Minister.

The evening service was resumed in November last. The attendance has been very good. On pleasant evenings the chapel is well filled, with an attentive and interesting audience, many of whom attend nowhere else on the Sabbath. It was highly gratifying to witness the pleasure that was manifested and generally expressed, on commencing these services again, by those among whom the Minister at large visited. There was an attachment to the place exhibited by the warm and heartfelt expressions of pleasure at their renewal, that was in many cases peculiarly striking, and fully evinced that the word of instruction, of kind and affectionate advice and powerful warning, so long and faithfully

delivered by him who first gathered this little flock, was still treasured in their hearts; and that they cherished a strong regard to the place where they had listened so often to divine truth, had united in acts of devotion, and joined in hymns of praise. We are led by this circumstance to consider these lectures as highly important, and as accomplishing great good. The time at which they are held is peculiarly favorable to religious impressions; for if there is a season when the most thoughtless and indifferent consider and reflect, it is on the evening of the Sabbath. This, in connexion with the circumstance that many attend, who are unable, from their many domestic duties, and from an inability to procure what they deem suitable apparel, to attend during the day, renders this service exceedingly important, and presents to the Minister a great opportunity of doing good. It affords us great pleasure to add, that several Ministers of the different denominations have aided in this service. We have the promise of others, who have kindly offered their aid, when wanted during the winter.

The plan adopted last winter of holding social meetings at the houses of those who attend the Chapel, and of others who desire it, has been resumed this month. These meetings are quite interesting, and we cannot but think that they are the means of great good. They are generally held in dwellings where a number of families reside; and it is seldom the case, where they are held once, that the request is not made to have them again. Meetings of this kind have been already held; and others are appointed in several places at the northerly section of the city, in the vicinity of the Chapel, in Hatter's Square, and among the colored population at West Boston.

The city having granted Mr Barnard the use of Ward Room No. 11, it was immediately repaired and furnished as a chapel. It was dedicated on the 5th of October, and remained open with a morning and afternoon service to the 16th of November, when the evening service was added. The audience is composed almost entirely of children during the day, who attend in great numbers and engage in the service in a manner that evinces deep interest and affords a most cheering prospect for the future. No exertions will be spared to gather to it all children who are unprovided with places of religious worship and instruction. The evening service is to be conducted as it has been at the Friend Street chapel. The audience is already quite large, and the number of those for whose aid it is especially designed is constantly increasing.

We hope that each season will give us both greater facilities and more leisure for making these chapels all that the friends of our mission would desire to see them. We pray for the blessing of Heaven to render them the centres of a Christian sympathy and connexion with all to whom such sympathy and connexion will be welcome.

We have said, that besides the public services on the Sabbath at the chapels, we occasionally hold religious meetings in private rooms. Our friends could aid us greatly in conducting or extending them. Bible classes might be formed, and small circles gathered in various neighborhoods for the same purpose, and very much in the same way that children are now gathered by the Sunday school teacher. The large class of young men, and young women, who are too old for the Sabbath schools certainly deserves more regard from Christian

philanthropy than it has hitherto received. Incalculable good might be effected, should exertions be made to extend towards all of this condition the spirit and the light of our holy religion. Much is already done in the way of lectures and lyceums for them. Much more even of an intellectual character merely might however be afforded, especially for the benefit of females. And then the whole ground of moral and religious guidance and instruction remains as yet to be entered upon. The science of morals and religion—the critical and the practical study of Revelation—the philosophy of human nature—with every kindred subject—are topics that, rightly presented, would soon engross the attention of our young men and women, and, under the blessing of God, do every thing for purifying and elevating their lives and motives. No friend of his race should rest till some steps are taken for establishing and upholding regular and full instruction upon these subjects.

Another object of equal importance is the distribution of popular and useful tracts. We have found great benefit in circulating “The one thing needful,” by Rev. Mr Fox of Newburyport. Miss Sedgwick’s excellent tract, “Mary Hollis,” has been reprinted, and circulated in considerable numbers. We need many more of a similar character with these, which have been received with favor wherever we have given them. Our Baptist friends have placed a large collection of their tracts at our disposal, many of which we have been very glad to distribute.

5. We would avail ourselves of the present Report to call your attention to the Broad Street Infant School. This was established two years since through the efforts of Dr Tuckerman and several benevolent members of

our community. It has continued to gather the little ones of its flock from the wretched abodes of Broad Street and the vicinity. It has exerted a most beneficial influence upon them, especially in the way of moral guidance and advancement. From our acquaintance with all the exposures of the homes of its children, from all we know of the evil and corrupting lessons which without this school they could not fail to learn, from our estimate of the noble ends that lie within its scope, and — more than all, from all we have witnessed in our visits to the school, we cannot but regret to find it so little known or estimated, and so feebly supported as it is. A society of ladies have it at present under their care. Better patrons could not be desired. But their subscription list yields an amount far short of the annual expenditure. And all over this amount must be collected in any casual mode that may present itself. A paper has once been sent among our citizens, and a sermon has lately been delivered, for the purpose of procuring collections. Both measures failed of full success. Public attention — a general and enlightened regard for the school and its great objects is wanted. Without this, it might struggle for existence awhile, but must ultimately and inevitably be abandoned. Permit us to express our earnest desire that the school will soon receive the visits of many new friends, prepared to feel the interest, and bestow the aid it so richly deserves. Miss Ball, its excellent teacher, will always be found ready to give all the information in her power; should not this be enough, it will be very easy for any one, by visits or otherwise, to gain an insight into what would be the condition and exposure of these children every waking hour of each returning day, were

it not for the infant school. No one would desire more support than would thus be seen to be required.

6. We have continued to visit from house to house among the people of our charge. We earnestly desire to give our chief attention to these visits. Our ministry would be far from effectual without them. They bring us into connexion with many whom we could not otherwise meet. They afford constant opportunities that should be deemed most precious in the view of Christian philanthropy. They at once foster and manifest that sympathy and interest in our suffering fellow-creatures, which it is our prayer to God that he would always richly bestow. We sympathize most fully with all who look with peculiar interest upon this portion of our labors. We regret deeply whenever any obstacle is thrown in the way of its discharge. We hope hereafter to be more at liberty than we ever yet have been to devote ourselves to the private preaching of glad tidings, to a free and friendly intercourse with all whom we can aid in their walks through this world and their advancement towards a better. We have had much to encourage us already. And our most fervent desire is that we may long be spared to labor in this field. Others might aid us here also. The poor need nothing so much as the friendly calls, the aid and love of Christian visitors. Arrangements might easily be made to increase largely the number of those who will take it as their charge to bear the gospel from door to door. An afternoon, or an evening, in the week, might be spared from other pursuits, and given to the cause of Christ among the poor; or a part of the Lord's day might be hallowed on errands of Christian love to hungering and thirsting souls. Many a poor and lone

widow — many a broken-hearted wife and mother — many in the ways of ignorance — and many on the verge of sin — stand waiting for all that the followers of him that “went about doing good” may do for them. Let them not wait in vain.

Respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,
CHARLES F. BARNARD,
FREDERICK T. GRAY.

P. S. We find that our friends are desirous of knowing at what times they can meet us at the office. We would therefore state, that Mr Barnard is there from 10 to 12 on Mondays and Wednesdays — Mr Gray from 10 to 12 on Tuesdays and Thursdays — Dr Tuckerman at the same hours on Fridays and Saturdays.

*January 1, 1835.**

* This Report in fact embraces a period of eight months, since the Ministry-at-large came under the care of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches; but it is called the first *Semi-annual* Report, as the future Reports will appear on the first of July and the first of January.

TO the CENTRAL BOARD of the BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES,

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE beg leave respectfully to present their First Quarterly Report for the current year.

Nothing of importance has occurred during the last quarter in your Committee. No new measures have been adopted nor any special action called for. The cause, however, which the Fraternity have so much at heart, is gradually strengthening and extending itself in the community and assuming that settled and permanent character which is essential to its efficacy and success. The Committee have re-elected Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, D. D., Rev. Charles F. Barnard, and Rev. Frederick T. Gray, Ministers-at-large in this city for one year from 1st May, 1835, with the same salaries as heretofore. These gentlemen have accepted their appointments, and your Committee have only to regret that the health of the Rev. Dr Tuckerman is so feeble as to render him less able than formerly to perform the more active duties of his station and compel him to confine his labors principally to the Office of the Visitors of the Poor.

The Rev. Dr Channing having complied with the request of the Central Board to furnish a copy of his sermon before the Fraternity for the press, it has been printed by subscription; and an appendix, disclosing the history and objects of the Fraternity, annexed to it, at the expense of this Board. One copy was sent to each family in the several Churches of the city proper, originally embraced in the design of the Fraternity, and over two hundred otherwise distributed. The sound and ele-

vated views which this discourse takes of the moral condition and wants of the poorer classes of the community, and the eloquent and powerful appeals it addresses to the consciences of those in more favored circumstances, have excited general attention. The Massachusetts Temperance Society have requested permission of your Committee to publish an edition of it for general distribution, which has been most cheerfully granted. The discourse, as we learn, has been voluntarily published in one of the public journals in the City of New York and an edition, if not already printed, is understood to be in progress in Philadelphia.

These facts are of the most gratifying nature, and afford rational grounds for the belief that men are awaking to the spiritual wants of their poorer brethren. We indulge the hope that the great, but long neglected truth, which it is the principal object of this discourse to unfold, that in the *inner* and not in the *outward* man are to be found the chief sources of poverty, wretchedness and vice, and that the main reliance for the prevention or relief of bodily want and distress is to be placed, not in alms houses nor any other merely eleemosynary institution, but in those moral instructions and influences which may most directly serve to strengthen the principles, awaken the religious sentiments, and develope the spiritual nature of the poor, is beginning to be understood and appreciated as it deserves. If this shall prove to be the result, if men will look to the mind and not to the body for the cure of poverty, one great barrier which has so long separated the different classes of society will be removed; the sympathies of the heart will meet and interchange, and though their outward condition may differ, men will perceive their spiritual wants and capacities to be one and the same.

The Ministers-at-large, fully sensible of the importance of these views and grateful for the interest which is everywhere eliciting itself, have been, since our last meeting, sedulously engaged in the important duties of their calling. For their views and efforts, we refer you to their semi-annual report to this Board, just published.

Their chapels are filled to overflowing, and the evidence of good produced by them on the minds of both parents and children, is increasing, with every week which passes. The Sunday schools connected with the Fraternity have considerably increased in point of numbers within the last quarter, and a new interest has been awakened for them in the community by the late anniversary meeting of the Boston Sunday School Society. The Sunday school which it was proposed to organize at the southern extremity of the city, though it is not to be opened under the auspices of the Fraternity, is, we are happy to state, going immediately into operation under the management of a gentleman from Charlestown, who has recently offered himself as a laborer in the good cause of teaching among the poor, to which service he has been invited by our brethren of the Christian denomination. We rejoice to learn that the *ministry to the poor* is beginning to be regarded as a common ground, and that men of various and opposite religious opinions, are enrolling themselves under the same banner with ourselves, and are willing and anxious to join us in carrying on a common labor of love. This fact is a manifestation of juster views and a better spirit, and we hail it as an omen of the progress which the religion of our blessed Saviour is making among men, and a circumstance which deserves and should obtain all the encouragement which it is in our power to bestow.

We have spoken of hope and encouragement in the cause we have undertaken, but if we desire to see our expectations realized, we must feel more than we have yet felt, our obligations to continued and increased watchfulness and effort. Further acquaintance with the less favored classes of our city, has confirmed the opinion, before entertained by the Ministers-at-large and by your committee, of their number, wretchedness and degradation, and of the call there is upon us to regard the spiritual and moral wants of our fellow citizens in a liberal spirit, and to strengthen each other's hearts and hands, in the conviction that everything, which may tend to elevate the **character** and spiritualize the moral nature of the poor, will not only alleviate their bodily sufferings and raise their temporal condition, but will most surely and directly promote the prosperity of the established churches of our city, and advance the general interests of the more wealthy and fortunate classes of society.

Let us then be faithful to the trust which is committed to us; let us give it our hearty prayers and co-operation, and rely with humble confidence upon the protection and assistance of Almighty God, whilst we follow in the footsteps of him whose motto was *love*, and whose commission to his followers was to *preach the gospel to the Poor*.

BOSTON, JULY 5, 1835.

Ms. Jenks.

SECOND

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MINISTERS-AT-LARGE

TO THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.



BOSTON.

JULY—1835.

TUTTLE AND WEEKS, PRINTERS,
No. 8, School Street.

R E P O R T .

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BENEVOLENT
FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

GENTLEMEN,

Permit us to lay before you the Report of our Ministry for the last six months.

Our Office has continued open in the basement of the Savings Bank, and has proved an important means at once of increasing our information, and extending our usefulness among the poor. About a thousand applications have been made there within the last half year, all of which we have endeavored to meet in the various ways suggested by prudence or philanthropy. The Ministers-at-large of other denominations are on terms of friendship and union with us. Both they and we have availed ourselves of the assistance of the Benevolent Societies of the city, and have thus been able to do much for the temporal wants of the poor, at a far less expense of time than would otherwise have been required for this object. Delegates of these Societies meet each month at the Office with us, for mutual aid and council; and these meetings have already done much towards securing an enlightened and judicious distribution of charity. Street

beggary and indiscriminate alms-giving have been much diminished, and it is hoped, will be broken up, especially where children have been employed. Imposture and ill desert have been detected, and exposed. We could enlarge upon various topics of deep interest to the philanthropist and Christian under this head. But steps have lately been taken by the Delegates of the Benevolent Societies to have a full report prepared of their operations and plans, which will throw such light upon all objects connected with the temporal wants and situation of our poor, as to supersede the necessity of any further remarks from us at the present time. The several associations in their individual and united capacity possess the means of enlightening and benefitting our fellow citizens, both rich and poor; and we feel that they will rejoice to put these means into exercise. We must take this occasion to thank the Delegates for the assistance they have rendered us, and to express our warm gratitude to our brethren in the Ministry-at-large, for all they have done also.

We are happy to say that we have found ourselves more at leisure the past six months, than ever before, to pursue the higher and holier ends of our service among the poor. We look back with lively thankfulness to Heaven, upon what we have been called to witness and to perform. Our labors have been multiplied in the vineyard of the Lord. We have had new, more frequent and more pressing, calls for the exercise of the sacred office of Christian instruction, guidance, warning, and consolation. The supply of temporal wants has devolved more upon others, the supply of the wants of the soul has devolved more upon us. The poor themselves, and

their friends for them, have asked our aid more with a view to the religious and spiritual nature of the trust that has been allotted us through the kind providence of God. We pray that this may be still more the case in future. We should rejoice in that state of our community, which would leave us to the simple duties of Christian evangelists. With a view to this end, it may be well for us to express somewhat at length, what ought to be considered the objects and character of the Ministry in which we are engaged.

In the first place, then, the sphere of our labors lies among the poor, among those of them only, who are disconnected with the established parishes of the city. The lower portion of this large class forms our pauper population, considered as distinct from the poor.* This class, the lowest, most degraded, and most neglected in our community, comes of course peculiarly under our charge. We are in constant connexion with them; and more or less closely so, as circumstances require. We visit them for the purpose of becoming fully acquainted with them, to probe the causes from which their degradation and misery have sprung, and to learn the means of applying remedy and prevention to the very causes of these evils. We endeavor, in every possible way, to remove parents from this class, and we look upon no exertion as too costly, that promises to rescue children from the degradation and exposure of the pauper's home. We hold it to be an axiom of civic and Christian economy, that no community should tolerate the existence of

* The distinction of *the pauper class* and *the poor*, common with the economists of Europe, is not a familiar one in our country. It deserves attention.

a pauper class. Idle unless compelled to work, improvident and reckless, living only in the present and careless of the future, undesirous of improvement, and unconscious of any proper stimulus to industry, economy, or advancement, the ranks of this class should be disbanded forever. Christianity was given for the salvation of men. Its truths and warnings and promises are all powerless upon the pauper. He knows no wants except the lowest of our nature. He is moved by no fear but that of starvation or imprisonment. His bosom is unused to hope. He must therefore cease to be a pauper. He must be raised, or taught and aided to raise himself, from his debasement. He may not indeed cease to be poor. But he must cease to be a pauper. In other words, he must be brought to a condition in which he may become the subject of Christian influence.

This class in our city, small as it may be, is yet too large compared with similar classes abroad. We cannot but watch it with fearful interest. We dread its increase. We would gladly devote our lives to its extinction. Yet our unaided efforts here can effect but little. All the wise and good must aid us. Public sentiment, if not public treasure and public force, must act upon the mass. Many of our friends would be surprised to learn how many of those they relieve in the streets, or at their doors, belong to this class. We would ask them to ponder well the questions, "What benefit can I confer upon these fellow creatures of mine? Can I not connect myself with them? Can I not break in upon their debasement? Can I not teach them some lesson of industry, economy, and forethought? Can I not call forth in them a love of independence, and foster their self-respect? Can I

do nothing to awaken a consciousness of their spiritual and immortal nature in those who were born, as I was, to be the children of the Heavenly Father?" Should it gain such alms as these at the hands of Christian benevolence, beggary would be a worthy pursuit. Till it shall gain them, it should be watched with ceaseless vigilance.

In this connexion, allow us to bring before you the solemn question, what is our community doing for the rescue of the children of the pauper's family? The advance of society, the competition of trade and manufactures, our free schools, and the form and spirit of some other of our institutions are doubtless doing something. But where is to be found that pervasive, efficient, adequate agency, springing from Christian faith, and animated by Christian love, which will count no expenditure too costly, no sacrifice too great, that may be required to save the rising race from the misery, the moral exposure, and the spiritual deadness in which the pauper parents are lying? In speaking of this exposed class of our fellow creatures, it should be borne in mind, that their distinctive character often is that of voluntary and even determined dependence upon the charity, and resources of society. They throw themselves upon others. They draw upon the subsistence fund of the community, without any intention or thought of recompense. They are a dead weight upon the industry and exertions of all around them. The relief of society and their own good, demand that their removal and elevation should be constantly aimed at by the economist, the benevolent man, and the Christian.

The next class above this in the social grade, is composed of the poor. Emerging from pauperism on the one

hand, and mingling with the middling classes on the other, their limits can hardly be defined. Their numbers, however, may safely be stated as very large. Day laborers, domestics, small mechanics, journeymen, with thousands, literally, of females employed in washing, ironing and sewing—in fact, all who depend almost solely for subsistence upon their own strength, their daily industry, and prudence, are embraced in this class. Their existence is indispensable to the welfare and comfort of society. Their numbers should arrest the attention of the politician. Their whole condition demands the notice of the philanthropist and the Christian. Their wants should plead with us for the exercise of the holiest offices of Christian love. They may not need our money; they may seldom require any temporal aid; but they need our sympathy, our interest, all the assistance we can give them through our counsel, our advice, and our example, the words of our lips and the light of our lives. The poor have not been advanced and enlightened; they have not been made to feel and to value their connexion with the other branches of society, as they should; and the fault often is not theirs, more than it is ours. Great responsibility rests here upon those who have the means of improving themselves and their fellow creatures; upon all to whom God hath committed the gifts of fortune, or talents of any kind, in trust for the good of others. This responsibility has always been partially felt. The upper and middling classes, especially the latter, have long been devising and originating various plans for the relief and assistance of the poor. In the establishment of schools and hospitals, in the diffusion of useful knowledge, and the dissemination of sound principles, they

have to some extent discharged the trust committed to them. We quote the language of the historian of the Middle and Working Classes upon this point.

“The rich and poor are bound up in a common fate, and reciprocal ties of obligation. Neither prosperity nor adversity can visit one, without operating a corresponding influence on the other. The rich have an interest paramount to the poor themselves, in every circumstance influencing their condition; and with their numbers, employment, education, improvidence, and vices, they are necessitated to feel a concern, and to apply to their consideration whatever superior knowledge or forethought they possess, in order to the permanent security of their own enjoyments.” “In all ages and all countries, we find the poor remain stationary, unless acted upon by the upper strata of society. In England, the course of improvement has been *downwards*. Villanage was not abolished by the serfs, but chiefly by the interference of the rich and educated clergy. The foundations of civil liberty and constitutional government were not laid by the oppressed burghers of cities and towns, but by the feudal barons of the age of Magna Charta. In like manner, it is by the example and interference of the opulent and intelligent, that the state of the poor of our own day can be alleviated.”*

Our author is here advocating the Poor Laws' System of England. We have ventured to quote his remarks with reference to a more general bearing. Our own country has not failed, in part, to meet her obligations to

* History of the Middle and Working Classes, &c., by John Wade. London, 1834.

the poor. It requires, however, but a partial acquaintance with the condition of this class of our fellow beings, to perceive that a great work remains to be accomplished, before the wealthy, the influential, the enlightened classes shall have answered the whole purpose of the Creator. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is a standard, far, far above us as yet. The poor share the same moral and spiritual nature with ourselves. They are fellow-heirs with us of immortal life. They have with us an interest in the truths and promises of Jesus. They were formed, as we were, to know, to serve and to love the universal Father. Here, then, is ample scope for the exercise of our good will towards them. To seek them, to save them, to teach them the gospel of the Son of God, and to help them to fit themselves for the eternal world, is the charge committed to us for the benefit of the poor.

The establishment of the Ministry-at-large originated in the endeavor to meet this responsibility. Your success in placing this Ministry upon a permanent footing had the same source. We rejoice at these steps. We are thankful to God that we have been selected as the laborers in so sacred an enterprise. And we pray that we may never for a moment forget that our lives and labors have been dedicated by the expression of your wishes, by the solemn rite of ordination, and by the manifest will of God, to the religious culture and spiritual advancement of the poor. We know that we have a wide field before us. We feel that we have been called to a work of the greatest importance. As we review the past, as we look around us, we tremble lest our own incompetency or unfaithfulness shall bring injury to the cause. But we will strive to do our duty, and will trust the event to God. You will bear with us while we enlarge a little

upon the mode in which our Ministry is conducted. We are desirous of doing this, for the purpose of securing the interest and co-operation of others.

We are seeking our objects by visiting and by preaching. Through the former we often make our first advances. We commence our acquaintance with our future hearers at their own houses. We meet them in their chambers of sickness, and at their own firesides. In this way we become connected more or less intimately with them and their children. It follows from our visits among them, that they wish to attend the services we hold. The Sabbath passed together affords us topics of conversation and improvement during the week. The public service and the private visit are closely, and should be inseparably, united. We have the truths, the warnings, and the promises of the gospel to offer. This we can do in the house of God. But we have also to make religion a matter of personal and practical interest. We would do what we may to transfuse its spirit and influence into the daily tenor and domestic routine of common life. These we can best do at the homes of our hearers. Our visits would be comparatively inefficient without our chapels. Our public services would soon become formal and pointless without our visits. We might spend our lives, indeed, in going from door to door preaching the gospel, exhorting the impenitent, and confirming the feeble. But we should see comparatively few fruits of our labors, if we and the poor we visit had no common place of instruction and worship, around whose altar we might assemble every week. We shall always have visiting to do; and we know its value too well to feel that a day has been properly passed without it. But we pray

also, that each Sabbath may see us in the house of the Lord, with the flock entrusted to our guidance.

From our connexion with the poor we have learned that our preaching must be direct and simple. The children and the parents we address would be benefitted by no other. Without this free chapels would be open in vain. We have learned also, and we trust that we shall never forget it, that our chapels are not to be made arenas for theological controversy. No friend of the poor can wish to distract them with the claims and tenets of conflicting sects. To go among them with sectarian purposes, would retard rather than advance their social, moral and religious improvement. The attempt to form them under this or that denomination, is a direct and very serious injury. It calls forth jealousy and prejudice and party feeling. It arrays them in hostility against each other. It dissevers and divides those who should feel and act as brethren. It draws off their attention from weightier matters. It blinds them to their true situation and real wants. It leads to the neglect of their highest and best interests. It leaves out of view the two only points around which the poor and the friend of the poor should rally, Love to God, and Love to man.

In our visits, our preaching and our whole connexion with the poor, it should, in a word, be our only aim to prove ourselves their true friends, entering into their feelings, sympathizing with them, willing to do for them whatever the will of God may dictate. Avoiding party measures and narrow purposes, their pastor should labor to unite them to each other, and to the other classes of society, in the bonds of peace and good will, and to bring them under the sway of the kingdom of heaven. It must

be seen that our ministry has the good of the poor alone in view, or it will fail to accomplish the purposes of its friends. Where this is its aim, we rejoice to express our conviction that it will be a matter of little moment from what sect of Christians its agents may be drawn. This is the case with us at present. We beg leave herewith to lay before you the general state of the ministry as it now stands in the city.

Rev. Mr Collier is employed by our Baptist brethren, and preaches in a room in Milton street. Rev. Dr Eaton continues to discharge his missionary labors. He has quite a full audience in a hall at the lower end of Washington street. Rev. Mr Wright is employed by the Society for the Moral and Religious Education of the Poor. He is effecting a great deal of good at West Boston. His congregation of children in the morning and afternoon of the Sabbath is very large; and he has a full attendance of their parents and other adults in the evening. Rev. Mr Cleveland, Chaplain of the House of Correction, devotes a large part of his time to visiting the poor. These gentlemen meet with us for counsel and co-operation; and we cannot but wish that their numbers were doubled. All of us can do our work but imperfectly in so large districts as must fall to us now. Mr Robert C. Waterston, although not appointed as a Minister-at-large, has long discharged the duties of one, as far as other engagements would permit. He has gathered an interesting Sunday school, under the Seamen's Bethel, North Square. He has introduced religious services for his youthful audience, and conducted them with great success.

Rev. Mr Himes's Society have just organized an asso-

ciation for the support of a Ministry-at-large. S. Brown, M. D., late physician at Malden, and now a clergyman of the Christian denomination, has been selected for the service. He will commence his Ministry at the extreme South-end, and thus enter upon a field which we have long regarded with interest. We gladly extend our welcome to this new laborer in the cause of Christ and the poor. The Ministry has gained a new circle of friends in those who have sent him forth to the work.

The Broad street Infant School, to which we called attention in our last report, with the kindred institutions of our city, continue to merit patronage. They are of great value, especially in relation to the children of the pauper class.

The Sewing School proposed for colored girls is now in successful operation. One has also been formed for the pupils of the Friend street Sunday school.

Our own chapels have been well attended the last six months. Our Sunday scholars have increased in number. The services for children have proved interesting and, we trust, instructive. The evening lectures for parents and adults have gathered increasing audiences. More ample and adequate accommodations for worship and instruction, with other rooms designed to answer a variety of useful and sacred ends, will be offered in the new building proposed by Mr Barnard at the South end. Subscriptions of loans and gifts have been received, that are nearly sufficient to cover the expected cost. In collecting this money, the sympathy and interest of the community have been displayed in a manner at once to gratify our feelings, and to lay us under new obligations to comply with the wishes and answer the expectations of the

enlightened and liberal friends of the poor. May God guide and strengthen us! We are truly grateful to you for the patronage and favor you have shown us, and for all the aid you have rendered us. With such assistance, should we be faithful, and should the blessing of Heaven follow us, the work must prosper. It must go on to do good in our community. It must become seated in the affections of our friends, and take its place among the permanent institutions of our city.

Our late visit to New York enabled us to witness the fruits of Mr Arnold's successful labors. An Association has been formed in London upon the same basis with your Fraternity, for the continuance of the Ministry-at-large in that city. It was formed on the very day in which yours was formed here. The good cause continues also to be supported in Manchester. We trust that events are in progress, under divine Providence, to introduce the Ministry into every city of Christendom.

With great respect, your friends.

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,
CHARLES F. BARNARD,
FREDERICK T. GRAY.

June 30, 1835.

P. S. As the state of Dr Tuckerman's health prevents his visiting, or discharging the active duties of the Ministry, as formerly, he will take charge of the Office, and may be found there every week day from 10 to 12 o'clock. The Office is open under the care of the Clerk, from 9 to 1, and 3 to 5 o'clock. We trust that all who are interested in the good of the poor will avail themselves of whatever means the Office may furnish, and will aid us to make it more useful each passing year.

Many of the large number of applications that have reached us in this way, have led to a desirable connexion with the poor, and to happy results. The circle of our labors has been enlarged. Dr Tuckerman has maintained pastoral intercourse with about 100 families, Mr Barnard and Mr Gray with about 250 each.

N286.74
1835

THE

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF DELEGATES

FROM THE

BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES

OF BOSTON.

READ AND ACCEPTED OCTOBER 13, 1835.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION.



BOSTON,
I. R. BUTTS, NO. 2, SCHOOL STREET.
1835.

The Notes given with this Report were not read to the Association. It is hoped, however, that they will not be thought an unsuitable appendage.

REPORT.

THE committee appointed by the Association of Delegates from the Benevolent Societies of Boston, to report upon the doings, objects and principles of the Association, would respectfully state ;—that in a recurrence to the past year, — the first of its operations, — the Association has cause for very grateful acknowledgments to God, in view of the success with which its plans and efforts have been crowned. Twenty-six Societies are represented in the Association. Of these, however, two are for the support of infant schools, and two are especially for the employment of the female poor. Of the remaining twenty-two, whose objects are the collection and distribution of alms, twenty have made reports to the Association, of the names and residences of the poor whom they have visited and assisted, and generally of the kind and amount of the assistance given, and of the character and claims of those whom they have visited. In a book prepared for the purpose, these names are all entered in an alphabetical order, so that reference may in a moment be had to any name ; and in connexion with each name, it may be seen at a glance by what societies any individual, or family, was assisted from October of the last year, till nearly the

present time ; and, what are the judgments which were formed by the visitors of those who were thus brought under their notice or care. It is indeed much to be regretted, that while we have had full and satisfactory monthly reports from some of the societies, the returns from others have been irregular and defective. This is an error which we trust will not be carried into the future. Great regularity and correctness are required in the monthly reports of the delegates, if we would as fully as we may accomplish the purposes of our Association. Our monthly meetings were, however, well attended during the time of the active operations of the Societies, and the most perfect harmony of views and feelings was maintained in them. Much valuable information was given in the monthly reports, and much was imparted in the discussions which grew out of them. The right, indeed, is not recognised by us, of any interference with the objects, or modes of operation, of either of the societies represented in the Association. Each society is as free, and as independent now, as it was before this Association was formed. In a report of our doings, or objects, we have, therefore, nothing to say of the action of individual societies. It is proper, however, to give the information, that we learn from the monthly reports which have been rendered, that from October, 1834, to April, 1835, eleven hundred and thirty-two families, or individuals and families, were assisted by twenty of our benevolent societies. And of those thus assisted, it will be interesting to know, that

765	were assisted but	once ;
238	“ “ “	twice ;
64	“ “ “	three times ;
22	“ “ “	four times ;

14	"	"	"	five times ;
11	"	"	"	six times ;
9	"	"	"	seven times ;
2	"	"	"	eight times ;
3	"	"	"	ten times ;
2	"	"	"	eleven times ;
2	"	"	"	twelve times.

In view of the cases of illness which will be remembered, and of extreme destitution, a more favorable result than this it is believed could hardly have been anticipated. We think we have here the most satisfactory evidence, that, as an Association, we have not labored in vain. In view of the large number of our monthly reports, — for though not complete, the number of them was yet large, — your committee were surprised to find that only sixty-four were assisted three times, and only sixty-five more than three times. We believe also that nearly all those who were most frequently aided, were of a class to require little, if any, short of the aid which they received. Had it not been, however, for the influence of this Association, — or, in other words, had the Societies in this connexion acted through the last winter, as they acted in former winters, without any knowledge of each other's operations, we believe, that, by a comparison of the records of the twenty Societies which have reported to us, a very different result might have been shown. The table we have given is as accurate as we have been able to make it. It speaks for itself, and scarcely needs our comments.

The objects for which this Association was formed are, we think, of commanding interest ; and if the principles shall be carried out by which we look for the attainment

of these objects, it is quite certain that much evil will be remedied, and much positive good secured. Of these objects and principles, much has been said in our monthly meetings. Our discussions of them have, however, been very general. Your committee, therefore, propose in this Report concisely, but distinctly, to bring them before the Association. In thus bringing them together as an exposition of our plan, we hope at once to give permanence to the harmony of our meetings, and still greater efficiency to the future operations of our Societies.

The objects, then, of our Association, — what are they? Speaking of them in very general language, we may say, they are, first, *the remedy and prevention of the abuses of alms*; and, secondly, *the most effectual relief of the suffering poor*. These expressions, however, convey but vague conceptions of our objects. The question arises, what are the abuses of alms which we would prevent, or remedy? On this question we must be definite; and with as little circumlocution as may be, we will attempt to answer it.

Allow us, however, first to observe, that the proper objects and principles of Christian alms-giving are among the great topics which are now engaging the attention of some of the best minds in Europe, and in our own country. A few years only have passed, since the great questions respecting the poor were, what provision must of necessity be made for them in view of their increasing numbers, and the consequent *expense* to be incurred for them? And, how are they most *cheaply* to be fed, and clothed, and saved from that desperation of want, under which lawlessness, and outbreaks, and depredations, and all the forms of violence are to be apprehended? And the primary resorts for the resolution of these questions were,

first, as far as philanthropists were concerned with them, the establishment of institutions for feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, at the smallest possible cost ; and where elementary provisions of this kind were found inadequate, legislative aid was demanded in the form of new Poor Laws, or the modification and new adaptation of old ones. We do not indeed mean to state, or to imply, that in the times to which we refer, there was not much very active, and very wise alms-giving. But we do mean to say, that alms-giving was even generally under a very unwise direction ; that the true principles of Christian alms-giving were not understood, as they are now understood ; that incidental and great evils had sprung up under this injudicious course of action, and were growing, and continually becoming more aggravated, which were extensively and deeply felt, but of which the true causes were not extensively or strongly perceived. Let any one read the Reports of the various institutions of Europe for a gratuitous supply of the wants of the poor, and the Reports of the British Commissioners upon the administration and operation of the Poor Laws, and in the evidence he will there every where find of the constant demand for the increase of these provisions, in proportion to the supply that was obtained of them, he will be amazed that the errors of these systems were not sooner detected, and that remedial and preventive measures were not sooner adopted in regard to them. A new era, we trust, has begun in the work of christian philanthropy. The convictions are now deep and strong in many minds, and are extending, that no great and permanent improvement of outward condition is to be looked for, but through an improvement of character ; that the best resources for improving the condition

of the poor are *within themselves* ; that they often need enlightenment respecting these resources more than alms ; and that alms may even be a means of perpetuating poverty. It is under the influence of these convictions, that we have formed our Association. The Societies represented by this delegation are indeed alms-giving Societies ; and in this view of them, their great object is, the relief and comfort of the suffering poor. And this also is an object of our Association. We would that there should be no unnecessary suffering in one poor family, or of one poor individual among us. But we would rescue our Benevolent Societies from the imputation of ministering to an increase of poverty. We would do all that may be done for security against the dangers of such a ministration. We would give to the action of these Societies the character of the highest and most unexceptionable form of alms-giving. We return then to the inquiry, what are the abuses of alms-giving which most imperatively call for remedy and prevention ?

To this inquiry we answer, that the abuses of alms-giving are to be sought in its ministrations to vice. *Charity, or alms-giving is abused, whenever it ministers in any way to a neglect of forethought and providence, to idleness, to pride or vanity, or to luxurious or intemperate appetites ; when it encroaches in any degree upon the feeling of a healthy self-respect, or a regard to character ; when it in any degree lessens in the receiver the feeling that it is disgraceful to depend upon alms-giving, as long as a capacity of self-support is retained.* It would be easy to enumerate specific abuses both of public and private charities. We have all met with but too many of them, even in the little circles in which we have moved, as dispensers of the alms which have been entrusted to

us. We know individuals and heads of families, capable of labor, who will not themselves toil while they can live upon the toils of others. They are indisposed to any effort which they can avoid. They had rather beg than work; and as far as they can, they live, if not by beggary, upon alms. There are those, too, who might live in great comfort upon their earnings, if they were disposed to live within the compass of their earnings. In other words, they might live in great comfort upon their earnings, if they would deny themselves what they cannot afford, and were willing to appear to be simply what they are. But they are more desirous to appear, than to be, what they are not. They would not only find their condition to be a very comfortable one, but they would revolt from the thought of dependence upon alms, if they felt a proper self-respect, and were under the guidance of a higher principle of right, and honor, and duty. To give alms to such as these, we say, is an abuse of alms-giving. They need rather a ministration to their self-respect, and sense of duty. And there are those, — and they are not few, — who, in cases of occasional, and even considerable failures of employment, might pass through those seasons wholly without the aid of alms, would they, while they have employment, but look to the seasons when employment will probably fail them, and appropriate for those seasons what might well be spared from their earnings. And would not alms-giving here be at least a ministration to thriftlessness? We need not say also how many there are, who, would they but wholly relinquish the use of ardent spirits, would never require the aid of alms for their comfortable subsistence. Nay, it may be that they are in no small degree induced to continue in their intemperance, and wastefulness, by their knowledge of the fact, that,

when pressed by want, they can avail themselves of alms. It is with no pleasure, — it is even with great pain that we thus speak of many who apply for alms, and receive, and abuse them. It is, however, not to be concealed, — it is well known, — that injudicious alms-giving, has not only relaxed the main spring of industry in many a mind, it has not only acted as a bounty upon idleness, upon intemperance, and upon willing and unnecessary dependence, but it has even led to, and encouraged the grossest deceptions, imposture and recklessness. We should pause upon these facts, and inquire what are our duties in view of them? Let it be known that funds are provided for the various objects of human necessity, and these funds will be applied for; and supply in this case will indefinitely increase demand. It would be very unreasonable to look for any different result. If no necessity shall be felt in the Spring, Summer, and Autumn, of provision for Winter, on what ground are we to expect that such provision will be made? We shall in vain teach economy in words, where the necessity of it is superseded by the free supply of those wants, which the individual could himself have supplied merely by an economical use of his own resources. Nor have parents and adults only thus been injured, perverted, and brought to indolence, thriftlessness and debasement. Children are to a very great extent made beggars, through the facilities and excitements which are given to beggary. We say, therefore, that to give to one who begs, because he had rather beg than work; or, to give to one who is not too proud to beg, and yet is too proud to live, and to appear as he must, if he lives upon his own earnings; or to give to those who would be entirely able to support themselves, if they would but look to the future, and economise in

preparation for it; or to give to the intemperate, who, simply by abjuring the use of ardent spirits, might be independent of all eleemosynary aid; or in any way to supersede the necessity of industry, of forethought, and of proper self-restraint and self-denial, is at once to do wrong, and to encourage the receivers of our alms to wrong doing; it is to patronise pauperism, and it may even be, great vice. Alms-giving is one of the highest, and in the records of our religion, one of the most frequently and impressively inculcated, of our duties as Christians. We would, therefore, by every proper means increase, and would on no consideration do any thing to lessen, our sense of its obligation. But we would also feel our responsibility, as well in regard to the evils which may be incidental to it, as to the good which may be done by it. We must not, therefore, shrink from the fullest view which can be obtained of these evils. We know that it has been abused by many to whom it has been extended. And has it never been abused by ourselves, through the very injudiciousness with which we have exercised it? In speaking of its abuses, it is therefore to be remembered, that the whole blame of them falls not upon the poor. God forbid that we should be unjust to any one, and we are ready to say, especially to one who is poor. But we believe that a clear perception, and a faithful avoidance of the evils, of an injudicious bestowment of alms, is essential to Christian alms-giving. Rightly to understand uses in any case, we must also understand what are tendencies, and liabilities to abuses in it. We are not unnecessarily to do evil by the means by which we may, and should do good.

The great danger of systematic and established provisions for the relief of the poor, whether in the form of Poor

Laws, or of Charitable Foundations, or Societies, is in their tendency to deprave the poor, and thus indefinitely to extend and to perpetuate poverty. The history of such establishments is full of solemn admonition of these dangers. Nor is it even their worst tendency, that they may supersede the necessity, on the part of the poor, of the exertions they might make for their own relief. As far as this result has been produced, a preparation has been made for the reign and triumph of every base propensity in the soul, till in their progress of corruption, they have extended moral death to the best affections of our nature. This is strong language, but there is no exaggeration in it. Where such establishments have long existed, — for example, in England, — these dangers have to a fearful extent become realities. The history of the Poor Laws, and of the charitable foundations of England, furnishes abundant records of the dreadful abuses which have thus been made of charity, or alms. Nor have even its private Benevolent Societies escaped reprehension. Let us avail ourselves of this experience for our own instruction.

The published Reports of England upon poverty and the poor enable us to understand these subjects, as we could not otherwise have understood them. In those Reports, we have details upon these subjects to the extent of huge folios. And what are the lessons which they teach? We answer, that even under the wisest administration which could be obtained of associated and public charities, they have from the beginning, and constantly, operated upon very many as lures for support by charity, or alms, rather than by labor. They expose an inherent and very strong tendency in these charities, to all the evils which have resulted from them. As we read of these results, we are indeed almost constrained to say,

“ how could it have been otherwise? Where there is little or no sense of character, or sense of shame, to deter from willing dependence, the temptations to it need not be great. Human wants are divine provisions for human exertions; and where ability is possessed, and opportunity is had, for the exertions by which self-support may be obtained, it is God’s will that man should provide for his own subsistence. Yet many are, and ever have been, disposed to live with as little labor and self-denial as possible. Many are industrious, economical, careful for the future, only as they are compelled to be so by the absolute necessity of their conditions. They are always ready to avail themselves of any circumstances, by which they may live upon easier terms than of daily forethought, care and toil. We say not this in reproach. We do but state facts; and facts, for the evil of which the rich have as much cause to blame themselves, as to blame the poor. Nay, as far as the poor are concerned, there are often great extenuations. There is often far more of weakness, and of inefficiency of character, than of vice, in those who are thus disposed to live upon others. Still the fact stands out in bold relief, and for solemn admonition, that established provisions for the relief of the poor have never failed to obtain claimants, to any extent to which such provisions have been made. And not only so. The relief thus given has been received, not as alms, but as the proportion due to the receiver from a recognised common stock. As yet we see these results but to a comparatively small extent in our own country. The facilities for employment and support every where among us are so many and great, and our population is as yet so little crowded, compared with that of Europe, that demand in these cases may be resisted here, as it cannot be there.

But we have experience enough of these results to make us quite sure that they are not fictions. It is to be considered also, in this connection, that every addition to the number so supported, exerts some influence in breaking down the sense of shame in regard to this kind of support, in those who are in the same, or in a similar outward condition. Thus circle has gradually been added to circle ; and the whirling eddy has extended, till it has engulfed multitudes who once thought themselves, and were thought, even far from its brink. "I am every week astonished," says an overseer of one of the parishes in England, "by seeing persons come for relief, whom I never thought would have come. Among them are respectable mechanics, whose work and means are tolerably good. The greater number of out-door paupers are worthless people. But still the number of decent people, who ought to make provision for themselves, and who come, is very great and increasing. Indeed, the malady of pauperism has not only got among respectable mechanics. We find even persons who may be considered as the middle classes, such as petty masters, who have never before been seen making applications to parish officers, now applying. My opinion is, that they apply in consequence of witnessing the ease with which others, who might have provided for themselves, obtain relief."* Here, also, is the great secret of the pauperism of very many among ourselves. They might have provided for their own necessities. But they have seen that others obtain relief under their wants simply by asking for it, and thus they also have been led to ask for it. "I know that you have assisted those who require aid less than I do, and there-

* Report of Commissioners upon the Poor Laws, p. 45.

fore I ought to be assisted," is language which has probably often been addressed to each one of us. And if we proceed one step further, and take into account the peculiar pressure for aid, which always has been, and always will be incidental to seasons of scarcity, and to those fluctuations of commercial and manufacturing interest by which many for a time are thrown out of employment, and the wages of labor are reduced to those who may still be employed, while the price of food may even be considerably enhanced, the whole mystery of the danger of permanent provisions for the relief of want, and of all other than purely moral provisions for these exigencies, will be dispelled. It is in these emergencies that the greatest accessions are made to the number of recognised, and permanent dependents upon poor laws, and upon charitable societies. The difficulties, it may be the actual sufferings of the poor, but independent laborer, are then often very great. A strong sense of character, it may be a strong sense of duty is then required, for the maintenance of his independence. It may ever be his duty to receive temporary assistance, because he may not be able to live without it. But even in this case, are not the principles to be respected, and most seriously regarded, by which he would even to the last maintain his independence? And are they respected, or regarded as they should be, when he is brought under provisions for aid, in receiving which he is classed with recognised paupers? Are they respected, when, under the weakness of a temporary necessity, he is aided, not from private sympathy which might stir his heart, and call forth all his energies, but from funds dispensed by others than their owners, and in receiving which he is made to feel himself a pauper? Many thousands, we believe, have thus been brought to pauperism,

who, respected and aided as they should have been, might have obviated the temporary difficulties of their conditions by their own exertions, have gained strength to principle and character from these very difficulties, and ultimately have stood higher in the world through the very circumstances, which, thus rudely interfered with, have brought them to degradation and ruin.*

* Words are things: and in treating of great interests, no small importance should be attached to a right use of words. We would, therefore, be distinctly understood in our use of the terms, *the poor*, and *paupers*: poverty and pauperism.

By the *poor*, then, we mean those who depend upon charity or alms, for the means of subsistence. Every one who is thus dependent is for the time *poor*; and no one, in the strict sense of the word, is *poor*, who is not thus dependent. We may even bring individuals to a willingness to receive alms, who otherwise would shrink from them, by classing them among the *poor*. Yet every *poor* person is not to be accounted, or called, a *pauper*, for the very simple reason, that the term *pauper* is now, by common consent, used to designate the sordid, degraded, debased among the *poor*. The term *pauperism*, also, is referable only to the poverty which is accompanied with sordidness and debasement. These distinctions are to a considerable extent maintained in recent English publications respecting poverty and the *poor*, and we earnestly wish that they might universally be adopted. The maintenance of these distinctions is required by that justice which we owe to the *poor*. Nor is it less required for right views of the means of remedying, and of preventing pauperism. Great injustice is sometimes done to those who are simply *poor*, — *poor* by the act of God, and virtuous in their poverty, by confounding their poverty with pauperism, and by ranking them with paupers. Yet surely no great observation is required to convince any fair mind, that poverty does not necessarily, or always, imply debasement. On the contrary, every grace and excellence of character may accompany poverty. Every grace and excellence of the soul is within the attainment of the *poor*, and the poorest. Even the Great Lord and Master of Christians was *poor*. He had no home. He was sometimes sustained by *alms*. And so have been multitudes who have entered with him into his glory. The *poor*, therefore, may be worthy of all the

We have thus borrowed a lesson from England. Let us look for one also in Scotland.

In his examination before "the Select Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland," Dr. Chalmers said, that the total number of parishes in Scotland is between nine and ten hundred. Public assessments for the poor have been introduced into one hundred and fifty-two of these

respect which we can pay to them. By treating them with the respect which Christianity demands for them, and to which they have a fair claim, we may do much to save them from falling into pauperism. Nor should we fail highly to respect every one, who is faithful to all his means and opportunities of avoiding even poverty, or any dependence upon alms.—We feel bound indeed to say, that much of the guilt which we associate with pauperism, and with the pauper, belongs quite as much to others than the pauper, as to himself. The causes of pauperism are, indeed, to a small extent within the control of the pauper. But they are within the control of the intelligent and affluent around him. Let us not even attempt, therefore, to throw off the burden of our own responsibility for this guilt. Both as an Association, and in our private capacity, we should adopt such precautions as we may, that our alms shall not minister to pauperism. But it should not be forgotten, that there are other ways of ministering to it than by alms. Nay, the misdirection of alms has not done a hundredth part so much to produce, and to perpetuate pauperism, and to extend to it its most dreadful forms of debasement, as has been done by *the moral neglect of the poor*, and especially of the children of the poor. Add to this the excitements and encouragements to idleness, to waste and recklessness, which are found in the bar-rooms and grog-shops, in which the poor are first seduced to intemperance, and then carried as fast as vitiated appetites, with all the accompaniments of the most vitiated society, can carry them to pauperism, and the secret of their degradation and misery is explained. And where lies responsibility for the moral neglect of the poor? Where lies accountability for the facilities and encouragements to intemperance, by which the poor of our cities, of the country, and of Christendom, are everywhere surrounded?

parishes; the principle of assessment having first been applied in those parts which are contiguous to England. In the unassessed parishes, the chief fund for the relief of the poor is derived from collections at the church door. There are occasionally other funds, however, as interest upon small sums of money left to the Kirk Sessions. In the great majority of these parishes, the administration of the funds thus obtained for the poor may be said to lie solely with the ministers and elders. From a comparison of nine parishes which are under the operation of poor laws, and containing twenty-four thousand seven hundred and forty-three souls, with nine in which no compulsory provisions are made for the support or relief of the poor, and containing twenty-four thousand two hundred and forty-two souls, it appears that the ascertained public expenditures for the poor in the last named class, — that is, of unassessed parishes, was £464, 14s. 1d.; and in the first named, or the assessed parishes, £4920, 10s. 6d. In other words, the population of these assessed parishes was only five hundred and one more than that of the unassessed; and the difference of public cost for the poor in the assessed was £4455, 16s. 4d. more than in the unassessed parishes. The question arises, and was proposed to Dr. Chalmers, “how is this great difference to be accounted for?” His reply was, “there is no other circumstance I can assign for it, than the mere existence in one set of parishes, and the non-existence in the other, of a compulsory provision.” He adds, “the relative affections seem to be in much more powerful exercise in the unassessed, than in the assessed parishes; as also the kindness of neighbors to each other, and the spontaneous generosity of the rich to the poor. There is a great deal of relief going on in the unassessed parishes; perhaps as much in point of

matcriel, as in the assessed ; though not so much needed, from the unbroken habits of economy and industry among the people. Besides, the *morale* which accompanies the voluntary mode of relief tends to sweeten and cement the parochial charity in the unassessed parishes. The excellence of our system, compared with that of England, is altogether of a negative kind. Our parochial charity, from the extreme moderation of its allowances, does not seduce our people from a due dependence upon themselves, or to a neglect of their relative obligations. It is not the relief administered by our Kirk Sessions which keeps them comfortable. This is mainly owing to the operation of those principles, which nature has instituted for the prevention and alleviation of poverty. I look upon a compulsory provision as that which acts with a disturbing force upon certain principles and feelings, which, if left to their own undisturbed exercise, would do more for the prevention and alleviation of poverty, than can be done by any legal and artificial system whatever. I may mention that there is not a more familiar spectacle in our cottages, than the *grandfather harbored for life by his married children, and remaining with them for years, the honored inmate of the family*. In fact, I have no recollection of a single instance, — and I am sure it would have been branded as the most monstrous and unnatural of all things, — of the desertion of parents by their children.”*

* Minutes of Evidence before the Select Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland. First Report. pp. 282 — 288. Dr. Chalmers also says, “ Generally speaking, the people of my parish, save in a few instances, were in a remarkably good economical condition, arising in the first place from their own industry and economy ; in the second place, from the affections of relatives, which went far to supersede any ulterior resource ; but in the third place, there was never

We turn again for a moment to England, and to the operation of poor laws. And we are told that the language has actually been addressed to an Overseer, "why should I take care of my aged and sick parents, when the parish is bound to take care of them? Or, why should I excuse the parish, which is bound to pay for what is done for them?" This is one of the results of a system, under which children have been paid by parishes for the charge of their sick parents, and sisters for the charge of sick brothers. Husbands have also threatened to abandon

wanting to the full amount of the existing necessity a third resource, in the mutual kindness of neighbors; insomuch that I hold the fourth and last resource, or the kindness of the rich to the poor, to be the least important of them all. On the strength of these four principles, matters went on quite rightly and prosperously in the parish."

To the testimony of Dr. Chalmers respecting Scotland, may be added that of Bicheno,—a very competent witness,—respecting Ireland. To the same Committee to which Dr. Chalmers gave his evidence, Mr. Bicheno said, "the most remarkable feature to be observed in Ireland, is, the charitable disposition of the poor among themselves. I made it my business to stop persons who appeared to be beggars, to ask them how they obtained their living; and I found many of them going from cabin to cabin, sleeping in any place which they chose to select; and it seemed to me as if every house was open to a poor beggar. If he was in want, he had only to enter a cabin, and relief was afforded him from the potato. The potato appeared to me to be almost a common food. As long as it lasts, it is for the benefit of any man that wants it. I have no doubt that parental feelings are much more alive in Ireland, than they are in England. I do not believe that in all Ireland there are as many instances to be found of desertion of children by parents, as in many single parishes in England. And the children appeared to me to feel the obligation of supporting their parents much more than is found in the same relation of life in England; and they feel it to be an obligation from which they can never be released. In my opinion, a compulsory assessment would diminish the charitable dispo-

their wives, and children their parents, unless more money should be allowed to them. Nay, parents have not only forsaken their sick children, but have sold them for profligacy, and have lived without a sense of guilt upon the rewards of their iniquity. "The evil of the *amount* of parish poor rates," or of this tax as a burden upon its payers, it is said, "sinks into insignificance when compared with the dreadful effects which the system produces

sitions both of the rich and the poor. The rich would immediately send the poor to be relieved at the parish table; the poor would excuse themselves from charity, because there would be an established provision; and you would by this means break up what is of vital importance to a good state of society, the virtuous exercise of the social feelings. — p. 380.

So important is the subject of the operation of Poor Laws, that I hope I shall be justified by this circumstance in so far lengthening this note, as to subjoin a few remarks of Mr. Senior, a distinguished political economist, and one of the Commissioners of the King of England for revising and reporting upon the Poor Laws of that country. In a Letter to Lord Howick on a Legal Provision for the Irish Poor, he says, "the evidence taken before the Committee of 1830, is unanimous as to the strength among the Irish of filial affection, and mutual benevolence. But very different is the experience of England. Among the lower orders, and in those districts in which the Poor Laws are in full operation, filial affection and charity, at least that filial affection which urges the exertions of industry, and sweetens the sacrifices of frugality in behalf of parents, that charity which gives a charm to abstinence by the prospect of helping a distressed neighbor, seem almost extinguished. Every one who has lived in a country parish in the south and southeastern counties, knows that the support of the old by the young and strong is not the rule, but the exception. And to what is this lamentable difference to be attributed, but to the existence of a compulsory provision? I object, therefore, to making in Ireland any further compulsory provision for the aged, than that afforded by Dispensaries, Hospitals, and similar institutions for the supply of medical treatment and assistance." — pp. 15, 16.

upon the morals and happiness of the poor. It is as difficult to convey to the mind of the reader a true and faithful impression of the intensity, and malignity of the evil, in this view of it, as it is by any description, however vivid, to give an adequate idea of the horrors of a shipwreck, or a pestilence. A person must converse with paupers, — must enter work-houses and examine the inmates, — must attend at the parish pay-table, before he can form a just conception of the moral debasement which is the offspring of the present system. He must hear the pauper threaten to abandon an aged and bed-ridden mother, to turn her out of his house, and to lay her at the Overseer's door, unless he is paid for giving her a shelter, he must hear parents threaten to follow the same course with regard to their sick children; and when he finds that he can scarcely step into a town or parish in any county, without meeting with some instance or other of this character, he will no longer consider the pecuniary pressure upon the rate-payer as the first in the class of evils, which the poor laws have entailed upon the community.”*

And once more, says another witness, “Two laborers were reported to me as extremely industrious men. They maintained large families, and had neither of them ever applied for relief. I thought it advisable that they should receive some mark of public approbation, and we gave them £1 each from the parish. Very shortly they both became applicants for relief, and have continued so ever since. I can decidedly state as the result of my experience, that when once a family has received relief, it is to be expect-

* Report from his Majesty's Commissioners upon the Poor Laws. 1834, pp. 96, 97.

ed that their descendants for generations will receive it also. I remember that about two years ago, a father and mother, and two young children, were very ill, and reduced to great distress. They were obliged to sell all their little furniture for their subsistence. They were settled with us; and as we heard of their extreme distress, went to offer them relief. They, however, strenuously refused the aid. I reported this to the church warden, who determined to accompany me; and together we again pressed upon the family the *necessity* of receiving relief. But still they refused, and we could not persuade them to accept our offer. We felt so much interested in the case, however, that we sent them four shillings in a parcel with a letter, desiring them to apply for more if they continued ill. This they did. And from that time I do not believe they have been three weeks off our books, although there has been little or no ill health in the family. Thus we effectually spoiled the habits acquired by their previous industry. And I have no hesitation in saying, that in nine cases out of ten, such is the constant effect of having tasted parish bounty. This applies as much to the young as to the middle aged, and as much to the middle aged as to the old. I state it confidently, as the result of my experience, that if once a young lad gets a pair of shoes given him by the parish, he never afterwards lays by sufficient to buy a pair. So it is also with parents. The disease of pauperism is hereditary. When once a family has applied to the parish for relief, they are pressed down forever.”*

* Report from his Majesty's Commissioners upon the Poor Laws. 1834, pp. 93, 94.

“There appear to be some errors so naturally plausible, that nothing but experience can detect them.— Such is the scheme of supplying by Act of Parliament the absence of charity on the part

Is it asked, what has all this to do with the action of Benevolent Societies? We answer, much; for the opinion is now a prevalent one, that these societies involve the very principles out of which have sprung all the abuses of poor laws. And is there not much truth in this opinion? If these Societies, gathered as far as possible to relieve every form of human want, composed of members zealous to carry out their objects, and watchful of emergencies for the greatest practicable enlargement of their provisions for their beneficiaries, shall yet not only act without concert, and with little or no knowledge of each others' procedures, but it may be with some jealousy of each other, and with not a little of the spirit of rivalry, the inference seems to us inevitable, not only that there must be a great waste, but a great abuse, of the alms which shall be dispensed by them. The difficulty, therefore, or the objection which is here brought before us, is one at which we are bound to look. Let us then not shrink from it. The very object of our association is, more completely than we otherwise could, to understand, and

of the rich, and of industry and forethought on the part of the poor. — The experiment in England has produced a state of things, which, if not immediately remedied, threatens the destruction of society; and of which the remedy becomes every day more dangerous, as the disease becomes more intolerable. Every Parliamentary Report on the Poor is more painful than the previous one. The Commons' Report and Evidence of 1817, present a picture which it seems scarcely possible to make darker. And yet in the Lords' Evidence in 1831, a period of fifteen years, is looked back to by some of the witnesses as one of comparative good management. And the last abstract of the Poor-Rate Returns, presented in March, 1831, shows a general increase of assessment in the previous year of eight per cent; and in two counties, Leicesters and Warwick, of twenty-two and twenty per cent."—Mr. Senior's Letter to Lord Howick on a Legal Provision for the Irish Poor. pp. 25 — 28.

to obviate the objections, which are brought against the action of Benevolent Societies. We have associated for the purpose of obtaining a knowledge of each others procedures, of avoiding interference with each others measures and movements, of profiting by each others experience, and of gaining all the light we may as well respecting our dangers, as our duties in the dispensation of alms. Let us then look at these dangers as they are seen by those who are disposed to view them as necessary, and actual consequences. We need not shrink from them, as they well may who have made no such preparations as we have to meet them.

We repeat, then, that the opinion is now a prevalent one, that Benevolent Societies involve the very principles out of which have sprung all the abuses of poor laws. For example, they are formed for the purpose of obtaining funds. They are therefore known, or are supposed by the poor, to possess funds, either for general or specific objects of relief. And these funds are to be appropriated to the relief of those who shall apply for them, and who shall seem to need them. Like poor laws, and other legalized provisions for relief, therefore, they must and will operate as lures to application for relief. And not only so. They invite, it is said, even those who would reluctantly expose their necessities to a private benefactor, to join the multitude who are already recognised as habitually and willingly dependent upon alms; and, thus to become themselves recognised, and willing, and habitual dependents. And yet further. In proportion as the disposition already exists in any thus to be dependent, rather than to labor and to economise, the knowledge of this provision not only supersedes the necessity of forethought and exertion, but to the extent to which the provision shall be made, or shall be supposed to be made, it

is a machinery for perpetuating idleness, waste and dependence. Nay. Let it even be supposed that the funds thus created are very small. Not only, still, will reliance be felt, and calculations be made upon them, but the expectations formed of them, and from them, will not be small. Nor will these funds, in their distribution, call forth gratitude in their receivers. To whom, indeed, shall gratitude for them be directed? They are not the property of those who will bestow them. They will not be considered by their receivers as the alms of those who will immediately bestow them. As far as the immediate givers are concerned, there is therefore a call for gratitude, only as far as dispositions to sympathy and kindness are manifested by the givers. In other words, there is a call for gratitude for these alms, only in the circumstances of them in which, by the sympathies of their distributors, they are made to seem, and to be felt to be, private and personal alms. The cost at which relief is thus imparted, if it shall be at all considered by the receiver, it will be understood comes from the funds of the Society, whose agent is but the instrument of imparting them. And what will this Society be to the receiver? Precisely what a Corporation is in the eye of law, — a living body without a soul. A Charitable Society can be an object of gratitude to those only, with whom gratitude is an habitual and irrepressible sentiment. The common mind at least wants a more distinct, and individual object, to which the sentiment may be directed. We throw out hints only, for we can do no more within the limits necessarily to be prescribed to our Report. We proceed therefore to the principles upon which we desire to act, as the distributors of the alms entrusted to us. And we think that fidelity to these principles will leave little to be objected to in the operations of the Societies represented in this Association.

The principles, then, upon which we profess, and desire to act as distributors of alms, — What are they ?

We answer, that the first principle of our association is founded in an admission, to a great extent, of the very objections thus urged against Benevolent Societies. In stating this principle, we might even use the terms, *the alms of Benevolent Societies are often misapplied, and are abused by many who receive them. Therefore should the agents of these Societies be always aware of the danger of a misapplication of their alms, and do all which they may for security against every abuse of the charity which they dispense.* We have, indeed, no sympathy with the maxim, that every man is to be suspected to be a knave till he shall have proved himself to be honest. Nor would we suspect every one who asks for alms to be an impostor, till he shall have proved himself to be as destitute as he shall seem to be. But neither would we indulge an easy and weak credulity, which shrinks from inquiry into the necessities of an applicant for alms. We would believe of every one who seems honest, that he may be so ; and we would respect honesty wherever we may find it. But that our alms may accomplish the purposes of true and Christian Benevolence, our eyes must be open to their liabilities, and their tendencies to a ministry to evil. We are, however, persuaded that much of this tendency of the alms-giving of Benevolent Societies may fairly be ascribed to the ignorance in which these Societies have acted of each other's operations. It will be perceived in a moment, how favorable is this ignorance to all dispositions in the poor, to avail themselves of alms as substitutes for labor. These Societies, in such circumstances, can know nothing more of deceptions and impositions in the cases which come under their notice, than may be learned from their own agents ; and the greatest deceiver,

or impostor, might be known and discarded by one or two Societies, and yet feel himself strong in the resources he would have in twenty, in which his impositions were unsuspected. Our first principle, then, stated simply with reference to the action of this Association, is, that *every error or mistake in alms-giving, and every misapplication of alms, known to a visiter belonging to any of the Societies here represented, is to be made known to all the visitors.* It is an important object of our monthly meetings to report upon all known cases of the misapplication of alms. The Delegates who form this Association are Visitors of the Poor, and a faithful visitatorial system is maintained by them. The privilege of carrying alms to those who ought to be relieved by them is indeed felt by us to be very great. We know also that there are those among us, than whom none in our community are more deserving, who yet cannot live without alms. And we admit, that if all professed believers in Christianity were alive to a Christian sense of their relations to their fellow-beings, and their social duties as Christians, there would be no call for Poor Laws, or Alms-Houses, or Benevolent Societies. Private intercourse with the poor, and private alms-giving, would then supersede the necessity of these Institutions. But of all artificial forms of alms-giving, we consider Benevolent Societies, united as ours are, and true to the principles of this union, not only as the least exposed to a misapplication of alms, but as far the best enabled most wisely to appropriate them, and at the same time to make them effective of the best moral influences upon their receivers. We would know, and we associate that we may know, and avoid all abuses in this department of charity, that we may most completely carry out in it the charity of the Gospel. Through this principle, we believe that our Association has already been an in-

strument of great good. But from larger experience, and larger knowledge, we look for still more important results of it.

We would state as our second principle, and it is a fundamental one, that *beggary is as far as possible to be broken up, — and especially, beggary by children.*

Law can punish vagrancy and imposture. But it cannot reach the beginnings of these great evils. How then is beggary to be arrested at the stages short of vagrancy and imposture? We have attempted, and we think we have done something for this object. We have done something for it, by carrying the principle which we have stated into our visits to the families we have found disposed to live by beggary. We have availed ourselves of these visits for obtaining a larger knowledge, and a stronger impression, of the causes and evils of beggary; and we have given each other the light of our observations in the cases which have come under our notice. We have also adopted the rule, that, as far as our influence can be extended, *no child that is sent out to beg shall in any case receive alms in the hours in which children who go to school are in the schools of the city.* Parents who so employ their children have to a considerable extent been taught, and they are universally to be taught, not only that they will obtain nothing from us by keeping their children from school, but that it is even a condition on which necessary aid will be dispensed to them, that they shall send their children to school, and faithfully keep them there. We earnestly wish that this rule might be adopted by the families throughout our community.

Another rule, or principle in relation to beggary, is, *that individuals and families that ask for alms, are to be relieved only at their homes, and after a personal examination of each case; and that relief in these cases, when*

given, is to be, not in money, but in the necessities required in the case. We cannot, indeed, look for the adoption of this rule by any but visiters of the poor; and even by them, as a general rule, it may be supposed to admit of exceptions. But we would remark, that the exceptions to it cannot be too few. We feel quite sure, that a faithful regard to it will secure much additional comfort to the virtuous among the poor, and often at a considerably less cost than that which would otherwise be required; — while it will do much for the correction and prevention of abuses.

In this connexion, also, although comprehended but incidentally in the measures of this Association, may be mentioned the Ticket System of the Office of the Visiters of the Poor. This system belongs particularly to the operations of the Ministry at large. Yet it comes directly and strongly in aid of the objects of this Association, in respect to beggary. It is well known to the Association that Tickets of direction to this office are sold to any who are disposed to have them; and that one of these Tickets, given to any applicant for alms, and brought by the receiver to our office, is understood to express the wish of the giver of the Ticket, that the bearer of it should be an object of the attention of one of the Ministers at large. To some extent we have availed ourselves of the aid of other Visiters of the Poor, in securing a proper attention to the cases thus referred to us, while we have made it a rule, and have felt it our duty, as far as possible, to visit those thus commended to our notice. We do not, however, intend by this system, and we wish it to be known that we do not intend by it, to transfer care for the Poor from others to ourselves. Every individual who has the means of aiding and comforting those who have need of aid and comfort, is bound by the principles of our common humanity, as well as by those of the Gospel, to

such an extent as he can, to be a personal friend and visiter of some of the poor and suffering of his fellow-beings. There should be connexions of kindness, of sympathy and interest, between every rich family and certain families of the poor. Not only would we not disturb this union where it exists, but we are greatly desirous of extending it. In truth, the rich families and individuals who live without this connexion with the poor, are far greater losers by their neglect of it, than are even the poor. Far closer, also, than it is, should be the connexion between the poor of our Religious Societies, and the congregations with which they worship. The thought is a painful one, how very small and feeble is the sympathy which is felt by the members of these societies with one another! Surely no poor person, who is a regular worshipper with any religious congregation, should be allowed to depend for alms either upon Benevolent Societies, or upon Overseers of the Poor. Without reference to the question of Church-membership, they should be in the charge of individuals, or of families, of the congregations to which they belong; or of officers in these congregations entrusted with the charge of their poor members. It is objected, that the recognition and maintenance of this principle would bring great numbers of the poor into our Religious Societies, with a view to the alms to be obtained through this connexion? And suppose it should? Might not this very circumstance, if wisely availed of, be made an important means of the best Christian improvement, both of the rich and of the poor? Would it not furnish such facilities as cannot otherwise be obtained, for raising and improving character among the poor? And in what higher or worthier service can the prosperous of a Religious Society be employed, than that of a faithful discharge of the Christian Offices to which they would

thus be called for the poor members of their own body ? We believe that few means would be so effectual for the suppression of beggary, the prevention of pauperism, the diminution of public taxation for the poor, and the extension of a Christian spirit through a community, as a faithful care on the part of all Religious Societies of all the poor who may choose regularly to worship with them. We refer even to a care for them, which will induce the poor to join our Religious Societies, that they may be objects of the care of these Societies. Let this care be committed to proper instruments in these Societies,—to those who will take and maintain it with the spirit of men and Christians, and theirs will be among the most effectual of the ministrations of the Church, for the advancement within itself of the objects and spirit of Christianity. When our Tickets are brought to us by those who tell us that they regularly worship with any Religious Society among us, we refer them to the Ministers of those Societies. In all cases, however, in which a stranger shall ask for alms, either at the homes of our citizens, or in the streets, and when an investigation of the case cannot be made by one who shall be so applied to, let one of our Tickets be given instead of money ; and thus let the case be referred to the Ministers at large. A benevolent mind, which shrinks from the thought of a refusal to give, where the seeming claims of the applicant are strong, and yet fears to give least the charity should be abused, must find no small relief in being thus enabled to refer the case to those, who are pledged to an examination of it. We believe that a great check to beggary was given by this system during the last winter. We trust also, that, by the same means, more may be done in this cause in the coming winter. We would, indeed, respect the beggar, however abject may be his condition ; for he is

a man, — a child of our own Father, even God, — and our fellow-immortal. We would, therefore, do all that we may for his best good and happiness. But we believe, and must act upon the belief, that it is hardly possible to live by beggary, and to live virtuously. We think it almost certain, that the boy who shall be reared to beggary will be a pauper for life; and that the beggar girl, if not early rescued, will be irretrievably lost. — Were the suppression of beggary, then, and the discovery and application of right principles for its attainment, our only object, very great would be the moral interests of our Association, and great its claims upon each of its members.*

* We think it should be regarded as an essential element in the constitution of a Christian Church, that as many as may be of the poor should be gathered into it. The demands of the Gospel in this respect are not met, by making a few of the most inconvenient seats in a Church free to the poor. Nor would they be met, even by an appropriation of ample and convenient space and accommodations for the poor, while no direct measures were taken and maintained to bring the poor into the Churches. A Christian Church should not only be a body of worshippers composed alike of the rich and the poor. It should be an Association of the rich and poor, among other ends, for the specific purpose of cherishing together the sentiment of Christian brotherhood; of receiving the strongest impressions of relative duties; and of learning and feeling, that, amidst all the interferences and crossings, the discordance and conflicts of outward interests, there are yet interests of each and all, — of the highest and the lowest, between which there is not only no interference, but through a supreme regard to which all earthly and opposing interests are to be reconciled, and harmonized. In the view of the Gospel of Christ, there is a greatness, an excellence, as attainable by those in the humblest, as in the highest conditions; a treasure as entirely within the reach of the poorest, as of the richest, and without which the richest in outward possessions may be poorer than the beggar who asks his charity. In other words, in the view of Christianity, all outward good is of no value when compared with virtue; — with the principles of disinterested love, and uncompromising rectitude; — with the spirit of Christ in

Our third principle respects those who are called the able bodied poor. It is, that *the alms which interfere*

those who call themselves believers in Christianity. With this spirit it is the great object of the Gospel to embue each one of its believers. Through its great principles of virtue, duty, and faith, it would bring about in its believers, in all occupations and conditions, a mutual respect of character, a regard to rights, and a sympathy with weaknesses and wants, and with joys and sorrows, which will not only equalize, but raise and advance human happiness in all the departments of society, as no other principles or means can equalize or advance it. The visible Church is one, and one of the most important, of the means which Jesus has instituted to this end. In the multitudes which followed him, to which he addressed himself, and upon all of which indiscriminately he inculcated these great principles, we see what he intended that his Church should be; and in his own peculiar care for those, for whom those who rejected him cared not, we see what should be the care of Christian Ministers, and of Christian Churches, for *the poor*, and for *the lost*. Is it asked, on whom, then, shall devolve the pecuniary support of the ministrations in the Church? We answer, that we have no objection to assessments for the support of public worship, which shall extend to every one in proportion to his ability. It should be felt, and by sincere believers in Christianity it will be felt, to be a great privilege, to contribute to the maintenance of the worship and ordinances of the Gospel. But we are strongly impressed with the duty, on the part of the prosperous, and of those in circumstances of competency, in Churches, — by which we mean congregations which assemble for worship, — to make it an object of especial care, and watchfulness and exertion, to do what they may, in their capacity as Churches, to bring the poor and the poorest, and even the outcasts of the earth into their number; and thus to the preaching, and under the influences of the Gospel. Let the avowed believers in Christianity, as individuals and as Churches, thus feel and carry out their obligations to Christianity and the Poor, and not only will multitudes be saved from falling into pauperism; but the poor of every Church, taken as they should be, in respect to their temporal necessities, into the charge of the Christian Society with which they shall worship, will be doubly blessed in the alms they will receive, — for they will then be the alms of

with the necessity of industry, forethought, economy and a proper self-denial, are not only encouragements, but causes of pauperism. We profess to act upon this principle, and we seek the information which will enable us to act upon it. The truth upon this subject is, — and the more faithfully we shall regard it the better it will be both for ourselves and the poor, — that except the feeble, the aged, the maimed and the diseased, the number is comparatively small among us, who, by industry, economy and temperance, could not provide for themselves and their families. We feel bound, however, to say, that among the feeble here referred to, we include a very interesting class of females, principally widows, and who have the charge of two, three, four or five children. Their sole dependence, except that of occasional alms, is either upon their needle, with which they can at best earn a dollar, or a dollar and a half a week; or upon employment for a day, or part of a day, whenever they can get it, in

Christian and fraternal sympathy, interest and respect. — No parish lines are known in our towns and cities. No one of our Churches, therefore, can consider the poor of any section of a city, or town, as peculiarly the poor of its charge. It can recognise none in this connexion, except those who are among its fellow worshippers. The greatest practicable increase of the number of its poor members, to whom it can extend all the charities of the Gospel, should therefore be felt to be one of the highest interests of every Church. Would to God that all our Churches might in this respect be alive, as they have never been, to the spirit and objects of our Religion! We believe that no incense, except that of the aspirations of the soul after an increasing personal assimilation to God, will rise from any temple upon the earth to the Throne of the Eternal Father with equal acceptance, as the incense of a heart, at once feeling itself amidst those of all diversities of outward condition, and glowing with the sentiments of Christian humanity; and thus prepared, as it has the means and opportunity, for a faithful discharge of all the offices of Christian benevolence to its suffering fellow-creatures.

any of the coarse work of a family. Many of these are the widows of men who might have left their wives independent of alms, had they but themselves refrained from the use of ardent spirits. But their husbands have left them broken in constitution, borne down by discouragement, utterly destitute, and surrounded by hungry and helpless children. The earnings of this class of women, with their best industry, are very precarious as well as small. At certain seasons, even with the extremest economy, they could not be comfortable without alms. They are unequivocally proper subjects of alms. But still greater is the number who are able bodied, both women and men, and who yet apply for alms. They are not inclined to do what they can for themselves. Many of them earn enough for self-support, but expend these earnings in vitiating indulgences. They know little of economy, and care for it and practise it less. They form their calculations, when employment shall fail them, for living upon the alms they are to receive. It is a delicate, and often a very painful office to which we are called, of judging and acting upon applications for aid, where want, and even necessity may at the time be pressing, but where it is not only perceived that this necessity might have been obviated by a proper self-denial and economy on the part of the applicants, but that, through the continued neglect of this economy, there will be a perpetual recurrence of the very necessity which pleads for immediate relief. In respect to these cases we can only say, that if relief must be given, — and it sometimes must be, — it should never be of a kind, or to a degree, which will make this dependence preferable to a life of labor. It should, however, be remembered, — and justice requires us to remember, — that many would be economical *if they knew how to be*. But they have been reared in ignorance, and indolence,

and thriftlessness. It may even be, that, amidst waste and want, they have been reared to every attainable indulgence of appetite, — and, as far as females are concerned, to every attainable gratification of the love of finery and show. If we cannot remedy these evils in parents, let us at least do what we may for their prevention in children. And we repeat, — for we attach great importance to the principle involved in the caution, — *let us take care that we do not enable the willingly dependent to live more comfortably without industry and economy, by living upon our alms, than the humblest of the industrious and self-denying, who receive no alms, can live without them.**

* In the Report of the British Commissioners upon the Poor Laws it appears, that, under the administration which has prevailed of those laws, the parish pauper has been a decidedly better fed man, than the humblest in the class of independent laborers, who would not submit to parish dependence. The facts upon this subject are very curious, and call for the serious attention of legislators, in view of their measures respecting poverty and crime. Should the question be brought before any body of fair-minded men, what are the claims of justice and right in regard to the provisions which should be made by law, or by officers acting under the authority of law, for the support of the able-bodied poor, and of criminals, no one, it is presumed, would require, or would even consent to a better provision for these classes, than the humblest of industrious and independent laborers can make for himself and his family. It would probably even be required, that as far as possible, no one of these classes should be quite as well fed by parish officers, as is the humblest independent laborer by his own industry and providence. Yet what have been the operations of law in these cases? Let a scale be made, upon which the living of certain independent laborers in England, who have preferred to be rate-payers rather than paupers, shall have its true relative place with the living of those for whose support provision is made by law, and immediately *above* the line against which we write, *the Independent Laborer*, we must mark that of the *Soldier*; next above the *Soldier* that of the *Pauper*; —

Another principle which we think of great importance is, that *wherever, in our intercourse with the poor, we meet with industry, with frugality, with self-respect, and with a preference of self-denial to dependence upon alms, the proper encouragement and support of an individual of this character is, not alms, or any other form of charity as a substitute for alms, but the simple and true respect and regard for character, which such a one will never fail to know how to appreciate.* Here, indeed, is a test by which the truth of character in these respects may be tried. He, or she, who really prefers labor and self-denial to dependence upon alms, will equally prefer our simple confidence, our just appreciation of motives, and our respect, expressed not by words, but by treatment and conduct, to any alms which we could give. Let us not fail to sympathise with such a mind whenever we may find it. But let us be aware also of the delicacy, the

next above the Pauper, that of *the Suspected Thief*; — next above his, that of *the Convicted Thief*; — and above that of the Convicted Thief, the line of the living of *the Transported Felon*! Thus have the humblest classes been most effectually taught, that pauperism is a better, — a more desirable condition, than that of hard-laboring, self-denying independence; that, as far as food is concerned, it is better even to be a criminal, than a pauper. One of the great objects, therefore, contended for in the Report of the Commissioners was, that the pauper should not be better fed by public alms, than is the independent laborer who lives without alms. This surely is right. Let it not, however, be forgotten, that the pauper is he who asks for alms, and would live upon alms, while by industry, and temperance, and frugality, he might provide for his own support. Should he not, then, be made to feel, through the very provision that shall be made for him, that it is far more for his interest and happiness to live industriously, economically and temperately, than to live either upon public or private bounty?

Copies of “Extracts from the Report of the Commissioners” may be obtained gratis at the office of the Visitors of the Poor,

care which must be maintained, in the treatment of such a mind. That which is offered as a substitute for alms, and which is to be appropriated to the uses to which alms are appropriated, however it may be disguised, if accepted, may lead to dependence upon alms. In the application of this, as of every other principle, precise directions cannot be given. No two characters, or cases, are precisely alike. Much must necessarily be left to the judgment of the almoner. But he is not fitted to be an almoner, who does not understand and feel, that sincere respect, sympathy and interest, will do more to improve the whole condition of the poor, than any alms which we can give them. These sentiments, and a correspondent deportment towards the poor, will save from pauperism, where the want of them will lead to, and inevitably do much to occasion, pauperism. There is no doubt that, a very great extent of the existing pauperism of the world is to be ascribed to the fact, that respect and sympathy are given, to so great an extent, to condition rather than to character. Multitudes, therefore, who feel that they cannot hope essentially to rise in condition, become reckless in regard to character. Let us do what we can for the correction of this evil. And above all, let us take heed that our alms shall not be means of undermining one right principle in the mind, or of enfeebling one of its well-directed energies.

It is most grateful to a benevolent heart to recognise virtue, — the triumph of principle, in any of the struggles of suffering humanity, and to honor the principles and efforts of virtue wherever we may see them. And we ought to honor them in the poor and the poorest, equally as in the rich and the richest. But how are we to honor them? How are we to honor the single-minded, unobtrusive, but determined spirit of a poor man or woman, or

of a poor family, who reject the proffer of alms, resolving at the cost of great labor, and of great self-denials, to look only to God and their own efforts for support? Would you honor this virtue by rewarding it with money? Let us ever take care how we expose the energies of this spirit even to the enfeebling influence of praise. The poor may be, and often are, injured by flattery, not less than the rich. The virtue which demands praise, — we mean not approbation, but commendation, — for its support, either in the rich or the poor, has but little root, and but a feeble hold upon the soul; and no strong appliances will be required to level it with the dust. There is a respect, an honor to be paid by men one to another, and by the rich to the poor, which is of infinitely higher worth than either praise, or money. Would that we knew how to give a strong impression to this greatly important truth! We refer to the respect, the honor, which recognises in virtue, in fidelity to the sense of right and duty, not the means of obtaining good and happiness, but actually the greatest good and happiness to be obtained by man; the richest treasure of the human soul; the good compared with which all outward treasures and honors are as nothing. He that is willing to take a reward for having done right, — for having done his simple duty, shows by that very fact that he is poor in virtue. Place him in a palace, surround him all that is sumptuous, and give him the control of all the gold which is upon, or within the earth, and he would still, in the highest sense of the terms, be a poor man. And if you shall persuade one, who, under a strong sense of duty is struggling for personal independence, or for independence of alms, to receive a *reward* for his denials and struggles, we shall have bribed him to unfaithfulness to his own soul. And having taken one bribe, he will take another, till the

whole remaining stock of his virtue may be bought for a mess of pottage.

Another principle, not less essential than either of which we have spoken is, that *where there are relatives of the poor who are able to provide for them, there should be no interference of alms with the duties of such relatives.* If the alms are evil, — worse than thrown away, — which operate as substitutes for industry and economy, in a still higher sense are they evil, because conducing to greater sin, where they interfere with, and supersede the demand for, the affections and duties which belong to the near relations in which God places us in this world. It is God's will that, as far as they can, parents shall provide for their children. It is equally his will, if parents fall into a condition of dependence, and there are children who are able, even at the cost of much labor and self-denial, to take charge of them, that parents in these cases shall be supported by their children. Law and right, indeed, require this support from more distant relatives of the impotent poor. Law, however, independent of a higher principle, can do little in this cause. 'The duty is one of high moral character, and as such is to be early, and universally inculcated. So it has been inculcated in Scotland ; and the consequence is, that, where there are no Poor Laws, and no parish assessments in that country, the care of the poor for their own poor relatives goes far to supersede the necessity of any other provision for them. And not only do legal, and other artificial provisions for the poor, greatly check and restrain the natural sympathies of relatives with each other's necessities. They also paralyze public sentiment upon the subject of duty in the case ; and induce a tacit approval of turning over poor relatives upon public charity, even where it ought to cover the individuals who are guilty

of it with shame and disgrace. We are living under the influence of these artificial provisions, and are suffering from their injurious effects. Let us do as little as we may to produce, or to perpetuate such effects. Let us do all that we may to obviate them ; to call up and strengthen the affections by which relatives should be bound to each other, and to show our respect for those who are faithful to the offices of kindred and of neighborhood. Here, as in cases to which we have before adverted, a judicious respect, and a kindly word of encouragement, are a far better tribute than would be the most abundant alms.

And, once more, — as not only a large part of the dependence upon alms among us, even among the virtuous poor, but nearly all our pauperism, or abject poverty, is either immediately, or remotely to be ascribed to intemperance, the question arises, — and it is often one of the most difficult which we have to meet, — “what *ought* we to do?” or, “what *shall* we do in the cases, in which, but for intemperance, there would be no call for alms?” This question is easily answered by those who have never been visiters of the poor. And as a general rule or principle, we readily admit, that *alms should as far as possible be withheld from the intemperate*. We go further. We say *they should not be given to the drunkard*. But the wife and children of the drunkard, or of the intemperate man who is not recognised as a drunkard, may be without food, without fuel, without comfortable clothing, and wholly innocent in respect to the causes of their destitution. How far, in these cases, should we extend, or withhold our alms? Or, it may be, the wife is as intemperate as her husband. Yet here are children to be sheltered, and clothed, and warmed, and fed. Is it said that our very alms will be appropriated to the rearing of these children in intemperance? To some extent they probably will be.

Yet there may be actual and pressing want of the absolute necessities of life. Let him who thinks it easy always to act wisely in reference to these classes of applications become a visiter of the poor, and give us the light of his counsel and example. Most of us, we believe, have often been much perplexed upon the question of duty in these circumstances. We would repeat, however, that *to the intemperate, whether man or woman, money should never be given. Nay, more. Even relief in kind should never be given to the families of the intemperate, beyond the demands of unquestionable necessity.* We would inflict upon them no suffering. We would most gratefully be instruments of their rescue from all suffering. But any alms we can bestow will but carry them on in their misery. Nay, through our own very alms may an intemperate husband and father feel himself relieved from the necessity, and perhaps from the obligation, of providing for his wife and children. These are cases in which law might do far more than it has ever done for the suppression of pauperism. But while it licenses the dram-shop, and interferes not with the drunkard, to whatever extent of wretchedness he may bring his family, while yet he commits no outrage against the public peace, we must do what we can that our alms may not minister to the drunkard's recklessness. Let us seek by all the means of which we can avail ourselves, to recover him from his ruin. Above all, let us never lose our interest in his children. Let us do all that we may for their salvation.

We cannot close our Report, without a distinct expression of the strong interest with which we regard the accession to our Association of the delegations from our Infant School Societies, and from the Societies for the Employment of the Female Poor. The objects of these Societies are, to an important extent, precisely those of

our Association. They were instituted for the prevention of pauperism, and for the greatest good and happiness of the poor. By different, yet perfectly harmonious measures, they are seeking the same great results. One is aiming at its purposes by furnishing employment to those who cannot obtain it for themselves, and yet without it must beg. There are not a few of this class in every large community, and they have strong claims upon the sympathies of those who can furnish them with employment. Our Infant School Societies would rescue the children of paupers, and of the most dependent among the poor, from the dreadful exposures of their condition. They would take these children into their charge, even at the age of lisping infancy, and form their first associations to a knowledge and love of right; — to a knowledge and love of God their Father; — and to a knowledge and love of duty. These schools are moral nurseries for those, who, if not gathered into them, or if left where they are, can hardly be expected, when they shall be advanced in life, to have any clear and strong conceptions of right and wrong; and who certainly, if uncared for, will not justly be accountable for their character and conduct, as they will be accountable for it by whom they shall have been neglected. We doubt not that every member of this Association will feel the high and strong claims of our Infant School Societies. One of these Societies, — we mean that by which the Broad Street Infant School has been sustained, — calls for our immediate attention and aid. Its necessities and claims should be among the earliest objects of the care of the Association. We shall lessen demand for alms, in proportion as we shall awaken a spirit of industry in those who shall apply for them, and supply those with employment who cannot otherwise obtain it; — and not less in proportion as we

shall save the children of paupers from early exposure, and education to the vices, which have brought their parents to debasement and ruin.

We have spoken of a few principles, familiar perhaps to all of us, a regard to which is strongly demanded at once for avoiding abuses of alms-giving, and for a security of the most effectual relief of those for whom both Christianity and humanity alike require it. Through these principles, our Association is intended to act as a balance-wheel in the movements of the Benevolent Societies of which its members are the agents. By visiting, as far as possible, and not once or twice, every applicant for alms, we have learned, to a very great extent, the actual condition of nearly every one to whom the alms entrusted to us have been administered. A few cases of very gross imposture have been detected and exposed. In one instance,—and of a female,—in which a long series of very aggravated impositions were discovered, the individual guilty of them was arrested upon a civil process, and upon conviction was sent to the House of Correction. Nor have we any doubt that the knowledge of our operations has done much to prevent attempts at imposition. Such attempts may be made successfully upon families, from which no fear of visits is felt. But they cannot long be sustained under a faithful visitatorial system. Yet it is under this very system that the proper subjects of alms have been aided, as they otherwise could not have been. They have been aided, not only with alms, but with that respect and sympathy, that counsel and encouragement, which are not less important and valuable to them than alms. Our ministry to such as these we consider among the highest of our principles. In our connexion with such as these, we sometimes find our ablest teachers; our wisest of mere human guides to the high-

est happiness, the best good of life. Alms-giving we consider one of the most imperative of the duties which belong to the stewardship of the rich. It is one of the offices by which we are to prove our love to Christ, and our fidelity to Christ. Nor is there too much of it among us. Far otherwise. If, when mis-directed, our alms may minister to vice in its most debasing forms, and most destructive influences, so also may the withholding of them be the occasion of as dreadful evils, as were ever produced by their abuse. Let it be our aim then to carry on our work with hearts alive at once to its privileges, and to our responsibilities in it. Christian alms-giving is yet a great subject for the consideration of Christians. Much vague, and worse than useless declamation has been employed upon it. Let us all feel that we need light upon it, and that we have much to learn respecting it. Let us do what we can to enlighten, to guide, and to aid each other. And let us not fail to seek for light from Him, who will not withhold it from those who truly want it, and are prepared faithfully to walk in it.

For the Committee,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Boston, *October*, 1835.

Read this day before the Association, and accepted as their Report.

HENRY B. ROGERS, *Secretary*.

Boston, *October 13th*, 1835.

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF DELEGATES
FROM THE
BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES OF BOSTON.

P R E A M B L E .

WHEREAS, the public good requires that the character and circumstances of the Poor should be thoroughly investigated and known by those who administer our public charities, in order that all the relief which a pure and enlarged benevolence dictates may be freely bestowed, and that alms-giving may not encourage extravagance or vice, nor injuriously affect the claims of society at large, upon the personal exertions and moral conduct of its members; — and whereas, these most important objects cannot be obtained, without the mutual interchange of all the information and experience possessed by those who are engaged in the work of dispensing alms, nor without the adoption of some common and uniform mode of disbursing charitable funds; — Therefore the various Benevolent Societies in this city have thought proper to send Delegates to this meeting, for the purpose of representing their views and interests in respect to these objects; and of taking such measures, as may be necessary for the attainment of the ends of our proposed Association. We, then, as Delegates from the above referred to Societies, agree to adopt the following

C O N S T I T U T I O N .

ARTICLE I. This Association shall be called, THE ASSOCIATION OF DELEGATES FROM THE BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES OF BOSTON.

ART. II. The objects of the Association shall be, to adopt measures for the most effectual prevention of fraud and deception in the applicants for charity; to obtain accurate and thorough information with regard to the situation, character and wants of the poor; and generally to interchange knowledge, experience and advice upon all the important subjects connected with the duties and responsibilities of Benevolent Societies.

ART. III. The Association shall choose annually by ballot a President and Secretary, who shall perform all the duties usually required of such officers.

ART. IV. There shall be an annual meeting for the choice of Officers, on the second Tuesday in January of each year.

ART. V. Each of the Benevolent Societies attached to this Association shall choose annually two Delegates to the Association, who shall take their seats in the same on the second Tuesday in January of each year; it being understood, that the Delegates now chosen shall retain their places until new ones shall be elected in their stead at the annual meeting.

ART. VI. The Association shall hold a stated meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, and at such hour and place as they may agree upon.

ART. VII. It shall be the duty of the Delegates from each Benevolent Society to furnish the Secretary, at each monthly meeting, with a written report, containing an accurate statement of the number of persons their Society has assisted during the preceding month; the names of those thus assisted; the residence, nation and character of each, and of the kind and amount of relief afforded; according to a form to be adopted by the Association. The Delegates shall also furnish the Association with a correct list of the Executive Officers, and Standing Committees of the different Societies they represent, and of the changes which from time to time may take place in them.

ART. VIII. This Association shall have no control, direct or indirect, over the funds belonging to either of the Societies represented in it; but each Society shall have the entire and sole control of its own funds.

ART. IX. This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the Association specially notified for the purpose; provided the alteration shall have been proposed at a previous regular meeting, and a statement thereof shall have been placed in the hands of the President at such meeting for the inspection of the Delegates; and the alteration shall be adopted, if two-thirds of the Delegates present shall vote in its favor.

ART. X. Special Meetings of the Association may be called by notification from the Secretary, upon a written request from the Delegates of any three Societies.

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,

President of the Association.

HENRY B. ROGERS, *Secretary.*

THIRD

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MINISTERS AT LARGE,

ADDRESSED TO

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON,

I. R. BUTTS, NO. 2, SCHOOL STREET.

1835.

REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

GENTLEMEN, — It is well known that the proposition of a Ministry at Large had its origin in the supposed numbers of families in our city, which were not regularly connected with any of our places of public worship. In the Semi-annual Report of the Senior Minister at Large, in May, 1828, it was computed that there were at least three thousand families in Boston without a ministry. The data upon which this computation was made, were, however, almost wholly conjectural. Ever since that time the desire has been strongly felt of arriving at truth upon this subject. We have even felt a very painful embarrassment in all the calculations we have made, and all the results we have given of the numbers of this class among us; because, strong as has been our moral certainty, that we were not far from correctness in our statements, we yet could not satisfactorily answer all the objections of those who differed from us in judgment upon this question; nor could we speak with the confidence which it would seem ought to be felt, where numbers are made a ground of reasoning with a view to action. For our own satisfaction, therefore, and that of our friends, we have taken

such measures as were within our power for obtaining a knowledge of facts in the case. A circular was sent, within the last summer, to all the ministers of the churches in our city, the objects of which were, to obtain information of the number of proprietors and renters of pews in each church; the extent and kind of accommodation for those who are neither proprietors or renters; and, *the number of families in the pastoral charge of the ministers, or known to them as belonging to their religious societies.* To this circular we have received replies from twenty-five of our ministers. A new census of our city has also just been completed. With these additional elements of calculation upon this subject, we would now therefore bring before you our views of the demand for a Ministry at Large among us, grounded upon the nearest approximation we have been able to make to the number of families which, without this, or some other similar provision, will be without a ministry.

Our city Register for 1835, gives us forty-five Protestant churches, or places for Christian worship in the city, exclusive of Dr. Eaton's Chapel, which belongs to the service of the Ministry at Large, and the Friend's Chapel, in Milton Place, in which no religious services are held. There is, however, a small congregation, not named in the Register, which assembles in a hall in Parkman's Market House, and another which meets for worship in Julian Hall. A new Baptist Society also has been gathered in the old church, in Methodist Alley; and a new Congregational Society assembles in the Odeon. And beside these, five places of worship are open every Sunday in the city in connexion with the Ministry at Large. But in view of the claims of this Ministry, reference is to be had only to the Religious Societies which have been formed, and are sustained, independently of it. To the forty-five men-

tioned in the Register, let the four then of which we have spoken, and which are not named there, be added; and upon the supposition that there may even be another, not known to us, let it be assumed that we have fifty Protestant Religious Societies, and fifty places for Protestant worship. We have said that information has been obtained of the number of families in the pastoral charge of the ministers of twenty-five of these churches. In some cases, indeed, a doubt has been expressed of the entire accuracy of the numbers given. But if there have been error in any estimation of these numbers, it is not probably a great one. Now the whole number of families in the pastoral charge of the ministers in these twenty-five churches is 3,849; which gives to each of them, upon an average, 154 families. If, then, we shall allow 154 families to each of the other twenty-five churches, shall we not have the full number which may fairly be supposed to be connected with these societies? No one, we think, will suppose that the average number of families in the societies from which we have received no replies to our Circular, is greater than that from which returns have been made to us.* Assuming then the same average for the whole number, we have 7,698 families connected with

* The Churches from whose numbers under a pastoral charge, we have computed the whole number of families under this charge among our Protestant population, are,

- The Church in Purchase-Street, — Pastor, Mr Ripley.
- New North church, — Dr. Parkman.
- Twelfth Congregational Church, — Mr. Barrett.
- Bowdoin-Street Church, — Mr. Winslow.
- Berry-Street Church, — Dr. Channing and Mr. Gannett.
- St. Paul's Church, — Mr. Stone.
- Brattle-Street Church, — Mr. Lothrop.
- Trinity Church, — Dr. Wainwright.

our Religious Societies. It is, however, ascertained, that our present population is 78,603. Let it be supposed, that of these 10,000 are Catholics, and we shall have a Protestant population of 68,603. Computing five to a family, we have then 13,720 Protestant families; or 6,022 families, which are equal to 30,110 individuals, not under the pastoral charge of any of the ministers of our churches. Or, if we shall suppose our Catholic population to be 12,000,† — the highest number at which we have heard it to be rated, our Protestant population in no regular connexion with our churches will be 5,622 families, or 28,110 individuals. In either case, the result seems to us an astounding one. It is a result which should awaken every believer in Christianity among us to the deepest seriousness in the inquiry, “What, in this view of our social state, are the claims of our religion upon us?” We are aware that our Protestant population

First Methodist Episcopal, — Mr. Lindsey.
 Baptist Church, Federal-Street, — Mr. Malcom.
 New Jerusalem Church, — Mr. Worcester.
 Christian Society's Church, — Mr. Himes.
 African Methodist Church, — Mr. Snowdon.
 Old South Church, —
 Hollis-Street Church, — Mr. Pierpont.
 King's Chapel, — Mr. Greenwood.
 Christ's Church. — Mr. Croswell.
 South Congregational Church, — Mr. Motte.
 South Boston Universalist Church, — Mr. Whittemore.
 Second Universalist Church, — Mr. Ballou.
 First Church, — Mr. Frothingham.
 Second Baptist Church, — Mr. Stow.
 Second Methodist Episcopal, — Mr. Stephens.
 Green Street Church, — Dr. Jenks.
 West Church, — Dr. Lowell.

† The number of Aliens in the city, by the last census, was 8084.

may be supposed greater, or less than either of the numbers at which we have stated it; and, that different numbers may be assumed as the average to be given to a family. We have taken the number which we suppose to be the commonly received average of families, and have availed ourselves of the best means in our power of a right estimate of the number of our Catholic population. If better elements of calculation can be obtained, and a more favorable result to our Christian condition can be shown, no one will more sincerely rejoice in an exposition of our error than we shall. Deeply interested as we are in our ministry, with our whole heart we would say, would to God it could be proved uncalled for! But while we shall feel, as we now do, that it is the only measure by which Christian influences can with any considerable effect be extended to thousands around us, in our very neighborhoods, and whose moral difficulties and exposures call for the strongest sympathy, we think we have good ground upon which we may ask, and claim a hearty and strong interest in the service, which the Fraternity was formed to encourage and to support.

The position of our city at this time, and in the view here presented of it, is one of peculiar moral interest. Not only has our growth been unusually rapid, but we are looking with confidence, and apparently with good reason, for an equally rapid advancement, for years to come, both of our numbers and our prosperity. The questions in this connexion are of solemn moment, "what is the character of this growth? and what are its tendencies?" These are questions at which we ought to pause, for they involve other and far greater interests than are apparent to the casual observer. Is this extraordinary advancement in numbers and in wealth a good, or is it an evil? The general cry will be, that it is unequivocally

a great good. And we say, God grant that it may be ! But numbers alone are not strength ; nor are numbers and prosperity alone either strength or happiness. Where, indeed, has depravity ever advanced most rapidly, and concentrated itself in its most odious forms ? Where has it obtained its most abundant nutriment, assumed the boldest front, and most effectually braved the threatenings, and the efforts of law to repress it ? Or where *now* is not only secret, but the most daring dishonesty, where is the most profligate extravagance, and where the most reckless intemperance to be found ? Is it not in the densely congregated multitudes of great and growing cities ? The tendency to this state of things has too long been regarded as one of the inevitable incidents of our social condition, against which no very effectual provision can be made. Or, consequences have been regarded more than causes, and the resort has been to punishment, rather than to means of prevention. Or, even where prevention has been the object, it has far more generally been sought by outward restraints, than by measures for calling forth in its subjects a self-restraining power, and a principle of self-direction which will lead to virtue. These are among the gross delusions which are to be dispelled, the low and narrow views which are to be raised and extended, in preparation for that progress which God intends not less for society, than for man as an individual. Nor do we think it among the least happy of the auspices of our age, that larger views upon these great subjects are gaining ground, as they never have gained ground in any former time. Men are learning that immense moral changes, and moral improvements may be made in the young, which cannot be effected in the old. They are learning that moral power can reach, and cure a multitude of evils, to which no civil authority can extend its influence. Here

is our hope for our city, for our country, and for the world. May God hasten the time when the poorest man, who shall be at the same time a man of uncompromising and incorruptible virtue, shall be held by all to be a greater benefactor to the city in which he shall dwell,—to be to that city more for honor, and strength, and happiness, than the richest man there, let him be as liberal as he may with his wealth, who yet compromises his truth and honor for gain ! There is no illusion in this estimation of character. We say, therefore, that it is not enough for satisfaction with our condition, and that it ought not to satisfy us, that we are rising to a rank in numbers with the cities which have in this respect outrun us, and that we may hope even to be their rivals in riches. More than 17,000 have been added to our population within the last five years. But of whom does this increase consist ? In part, without doubt, of the industrious and deserving. But in part, also, of paupers in every form of abjectness, of the base of every description of character, and of panders to every low and corrupting passion. To the thronged and busy, the prospered and prospering city, come those who have lost caste in the country ; who were there comparatively solitary, and to whom it is no small gain to be where they are unknown. And especially will all the cities upon our seaboard, in proportion to their activity and wealth, be the resting places, the homes, not only of far the largest proportion of the foreign poor who shall be brought to our shores, but almost without exception of every reckless adventurer, who shall make ours his adopted country, after having lost character and personal security in his own. It may be that we have suffered less from these evils, in proportion to our numbers, than some other of our cities. But we have suffered, and are suffering much from them ; and without other

defences than municipal ordinances, and officers of police, or their courts and prisons, the elements of social corruption will indefinitely extend themselves, till they shall discourage even from moral efforts for their purification. We therefore repeat the question, "is the growth of which we boast a good, or is it an evil?" Because we see a proportionate increase of what is called business, a proportionate industry and competition through all the departments of enterprise and labor, have we nothing to fear, and nothing to do, in view of a possible, and probable increase of want, and crime, and wretchedness? is that of which we boast a forced and secretly diseased, or is it a natural and healthy growth of our numbers? Is our prosperity in this growth all which it seems to be? Or are we, and are the young cities of our country, in a rapid advance towards the character and condition of the cities of the old world? Let us awake from delusion upon this subject, before it shall be too late to apply the preventive and remedial measures, without which pauperism and crime will not only grow with our wealth, but in the forms of legal assessment, or of plunder, will themselves become the possessors and distributors of that wealth! And how are these dangers to be met and obviated? How are our cities, as they shall increase in numbers and in wealth, to be secured against a proportionate increase of extravagance and luxury, of pauperism and crime, of debasement and misery?*

We are aware that in our Reports you will look for facts, and not for speculations; for evidence of good accomplished, rather than for schemes for its accomplish-

*In 'Note D,' in the "Tenth Annual Report of the Prison, Discipline Society, Boston," is a table of "Statistics from the Prisons of Massachusetts." In one column of that table, we have the population of the several Counties; and in another, the "Com-

ment. Yet for a right estimate of our service, it is essential that right views be taken of the evils upon which this

commitments for crime in 1834." From these data it appears that the commitments were, in

Plymouth,	pop.	43,044	com.	19	proportion	1	in	2,265
Hampshire,	"	30,254	"	21	"	1	in	1,440
Norfolk,	"	41,972	"	35	"	1	in	1,199
Worcester,	"	84,355	"	94	"	1	in	897
Berkshire,	"	37,835	"	43	"	1	in	879
Bristol,	"	49,592	"	69	"	1	in	718
Dukes,	"	3,517	"	5	"	1	in	703
Essex,	"	82,859	"	132	"	1	in	627
Middlesex,	"	77,961	"	174	"	1	in	448
Suffolk,	"	76,000	"	1,991	"	1	in	38

We do not bring this before the reader as a scale of the true proportion between the crime and population of the several counties in our State. Not only would many tables like that to which we have referred in the report of the Prison Discipline Society, and which should give the statistics of successive years, be required for a fair computation of the proportion of crime; but a full view also of all the circumstances which bear upon commitments in the city and in the country. Still the inference seems a fair one, that such differences as are here presented could hardly occur in any year, if crime itself were not much more extensive in the city than in the country. The Chaplain of the State Prison in Connecticut says in his last report, "there is an obvious connexion between crime, and the habits which are formed, and the temptations which are to be met with in cities. One hundred and six out of two hundred convicts, have had their habits more or less formed by a residence in cities. From those counties in the State, which embrace cities within their limits, twice or thrice the number of convicts is usually sent to this prison, in proportion to their population, that are sent from other counties in which there are no cities." Is it asked, what is our object in this statement? We answer, to give as strong an impression as we may of the fact, that crime will increase with our numbers, as it has increased with the growth of cities elsewhere, unless we shall employ more efficient remedial and preventive measures than have hitherto been brought to bear upon it. We are, indeed, well aware of the scepticism with which

service is to bear. In other words, it is essential that the truth, so often stated as a mere sentiment, should be regarded and treated as a *fact*; the truth, we mean, that the evils from which society most severely suffers, the greatest evils among all classes, from the highest to the lowest, are *moral evils*. They are therefore evils which are to be regarded as to an indefinite extent within human control. They are not the evils which are to be found in Hospitals, Infirmarys and Asylums. They are not necessary ignorance, or unavoidable poverty, or bereavement by death. They are not tempests, or conflagrations, or the vicissitudes of seasons, or what are called the accidents of life. They are the evils which society has sought to punish, and thus to restrain, by the terrors of laws and magistrates, by courts of justice and prisons, by fines and gibbets. Or they are the evils, whether punishable by law or not, for which every one acknowledges that they who are guilty of them should be held *accountable*. The relation of cause and effect is not more certain in the operation of any of the laws of matter, than in that of the great moral law which connects the decline, debasement, and misery of cities, states and nations, with unfaithfulness to the means of a progressive public piety and virtue. This is a great leading fact in the philosophy of human society. It is a great leading fact in view of measures for the remedy and prevention of evil, the amelioration of human suffering, and the improvement at once of character and condition among men. It is a

all propositions of mere moral appliances in the case will be received by many. We, however, have great confidence in no others; and in these, wisely selected and faithfully employed, we have the strongest assurance of a degree of success otherwise wholly unattainable.

fact in which all who will dwell upon it will not only find consolation and hope for themselves, and others, but in the light of which they will perceive, as otherwise they could not, the causes of the futility of all other than moral measures for checking and restraining them. Centuries alone of legislation would not have effected half as much for the cause of temperance, as has been accomplished in half a dozen years by the recognition of intemperance as one of the most pernicious of moral evils, and as widely extended a moral effort for its suppression. Nor till the moral evils of the long received principles and practice in regard to prisons were revealed—till the moral abominations of those dens of iniquity were brought to light, and exposed before every eye, was there a movement for the reformation of prison discipline. Yet how great are the changes which have been accomplished by a construction and government of prisons, founded upon the fact, that to recover men from moral evil, they must be treated as moral beings. Our peculiar object is, indeed, the moral advancement of the poor. Beginning with the most indigent, and extending our care as widely as we may among this class, we would also comprehend as many as we may of those who are not among the poorest within the circle of our labors. As the ministry has now been in operation nine years, we feel that we are not obliged to speak of it simply as an experiment. We believe it is acknowledged by those who have most carefully observed its operations, to have borne upon the evils of the class to which it has been extended with a success, which now fairly claims for it a place among the recognised and cherished institutions of our city.

The ministry at large has for its specific purpose, the widest possible extension of the means and blessings of Christianity among those not connected with our religious

societies. We believe that there is a demand for more churches than we now have; and that, if additional churches should be erected, and supplied with an able ministry, they would be filled with regular attendants upon their services, who will be ready and able themselves to sustain the institutions of our religion. But let three, or four, or more additional churches be erected, and the number will still be large of those, to whom, if religious influences are to be extended, it must be by a ministry whose peculiar duty and service it shall be, to carry these influences to those who are hardly, if at all, to be brought to places of worship. This would be the case, even if all our places of worship were free to all. But to a still greater extent must it be so, where churches are private property; and where no one, therefore, can be recognised as a member of a religious society, who either is not a proprietor or renter of a pew, or—*one of the poor of a society*. It is in vain to say, we have free seats in our churches to which the poor may go if they will, and it is therefore their own fault that they do not go; or, that the pretence is with many altogether a false one, that they cannot afford to be renters of seats in our churches. We admit that this pretence may in some cases be a false one; and we doubt not, that, with a little economy, many might be renters of seats, who now cannot be. Still the fact is, that either from a want of economy, or of will, many who never receive alms also go regularly to no place of worship. Many also do not go to church, because they have not the attire in which they are willing to go; and others are kept at home by the charge of young families which they cannot leave. And both of the poor, or the dependent upon alms, and of those who are not poor, and who yet earn only their daily subsistence by their daily labors, there are many, who, if they are ever to be gathered for worship, must be

sought out, and invited, and encouraged to connect themselves with worshipping societies. In the number to which we have referred of those unconnected with our churches, there are not a few who are utterly indifferent to religion in any form. They know nothing of it, and care nothing for it. And we have also among us sceptics and infidels. But even among these two last classes, we sometimes find those who are brought by peculiar circumstances in the providence of God to a willingness, and even a desire to hear, and to be instructed upon the great interests of their souls, and of the gospel. Since the commencement of the ministry at large, its services, to a greater or less degree, have been extended to thousands of families. Of the results of these services, we would speak modestly. But, we thank God, that we can also speak of them with some confidence. Allow us, however, before we speak of results, to say a word of our modes of operation in it.

Our plan of action is a very simple one. At the beginning of our ministry, of course, the families with which we were to connect ourselves were to be sought out by us. We then went from house to house, guided to a great extent by external indications, and introduced ourselves as Christian ministers. Or, it may be, before we had intimated who we were, we sought to learn whether the children of the families upon which we called were connected with any Sunday School; and whether they were also in our common schools? The simple fact, however, of the announcement of ourselves as Christian ministers, even before we had made any statement of the purposes of our visit, was generally an entire security of a respectful reception. It was so not only among those from whose general character a very different treatment might have been

feared, but among those even, almost without exception, whose obvious recklessness of principle and life at first sight seemed in direct array against us. We know, indeed, that there are those, who will attribute this apparent kindness to any, and every cause, except to a respect for religion itself in the persons of its ministers. And we are ourselves entirely aware of the mixed character of the considerations, which have led to this kindly reception of us. But we have not space here for an exposition of motives. We give only the fact,—and it is a very interesting one, — that in the important object on the part of Ministers at Large, of connecting themselves with the families which it is desirable to bring under their pastoral charge, we can state as the result of our experience, that no very great difficulty in forming this connexion is to be apprehended in one per cent of the families to which the services of this Ministry are to be offered, — except in the cases of the families which are given up to, and are sustained by profligacy. Now, however, we have each of us so many families known to us, and with whom we are more or less intimately connected as Christian ministers, that we have no longer to seek out objects for our service. Nay, families are constantly referred to us by those to whom they apply for aid ; and we are now so well known among the classes to which our Ministry is appropriated, that individuals and families of these classes come to us in their various difficulties and embarrassments, either self-directed, or encouraged by one another, to seek the advice, or other assistance which they need. These families we serve as we may, in the first place by daily visitings ; and, secondly, through our chapels. We are not willing to speak of the comparative importance of

these modes of operation, because we could not dispense with either of them.

Ours is peculiarly a Visiting Ministry. Our rule and practice is, to give nearly all the working hours of every day to personal intercourse with those to whom we minister. A Minister at Large, in our view of his office, cannot become what is technically called a learned theologian. He can have but little leisure for books. Nor is great theological learning required for his service. Of infinitely more importance in it is a deep and all pervading interest in the human soul, and a growing knowledge of human nature; a deep interest in the moral exposures, difficulties and necessities of those to whom the Ministry is to be extended; and, if we may be allowed the expression, a facility, an aptitude in communicating with the subjects of it. We have said that our Ministry comprehends many who are hardly to be brought into our churches. It also comprehends many who are hardly to be brought to any places of public worship and instruction. But it may be exercised to great and lasting good in their habitations. It is to be observed also, that it comprehends very many offices beside those of direct religious teaching. It includes every service for those for whom it is intended, which want, and difficulty, and exposure may claim, upon the ground either of humanity, or of religion. Its aim, its ultimate object is, the widest possible accomplishment of the objects of Christianity in every family, and individual, within its circle. But in subserviency to this object, it would do all which it may for every practicable improvement, both of condition and character. It would look at that wonderful compound called character, as it is, — not a unity, but an infinitely diversified admixture of discordant elements; affected

variously in almost every one by the same influences ; still improvable in the best, and not without ground for hope, and labor for improvement in the worst. And it recognises as first principles in the service, that the most efficient teaching is that which is addressed immediately to the individual, and which is accommodated to all the circumstances of individual condition and character ; and, that while home receives its holiest light, and its highest happiness from the affections, interests and habits of its inmates, so these elements of character are in turn compounded, and moulded, by no outward circumstances of life so much, as by those of home. We would therefore make home all that it should be, that it may minister to improvement of character ; and do all that we may to improve character, that it may give new attractions and charms to home. We go from house to house, regarding in each all that may bear upon character ; availing ourselves of all considerations and means by which we may bring the confused apartment into order ; teaching cleanliness to the filthy, industry to the indolent, and forbearance and kindness to the contentious ; to the intemperate, abstinence from intoxicating indulgences, and forethought and economy to the wasteful who look not beyond the passing day. There is often much, very much upon these topics to be taught and gained, either in preparation for direct religious instruction, or in immediate and continued connexion with it. Then, too, in our daily visits, we extend a daily care to the children of the families with which we become connected. If these children are proper subjects for our schools, we encourage those who are faithful to school to persevere in their fidelity ; and when any by truancy, or other causes, are exposed to a life of vagrancy, we do what we can to call

them back to duty, and to save them from the ruin with which they are threatened. In this department of our service we can teach, as we otherwise could not, parental and filial duties and interests ; and can render essential aid to parents, in obtaining places and employments for their children. We also distribute tracts which we think suited to be useful ; and while we avoid the discussion of all dogmas, which, if agitated, would have no practical bearing upon character and life, we endeavor, according to the best lights which God shall give us, to show to all with whom we communicate, what we think to be the living and regenerating principles of Christian truth and righteousness. Nothing can be more unimposing, than is this portion of our work. Yet in our view, nothing can be more important for multitudes of our fellow-beings. Multitudes of them are to be encouraged and strengthened, improved and blessed by no means so effectually, as by the sympathy and interest of those in more favored conditions. There is nothing which they so much need, nothing they will so gratefully receive. They want the consolations and excitements we can give them ; the counsel we can impart in their embarrassments and difficulties ; and aids of various kinds which we can render, beside those of alms, and which will do much to supersede the necessity of alms. Nor in the discharge of these offices are we serving those only who are immediately concerned in them. Society around us is benefited by them, as far as it is affected by the conditions and characters of the individuals and families to which we minister ; and the way of the Lord is prepared, if his kingdom be not immediately extended by them. In our visits, indeed, we have in view, and hold ourselves in readiness for, every office and service, which the condi-

tions of those whom we visit may require, and which a Christian friend can perform. This is our first mode of operation.

Our second mode of operation is by our chapels. The importance of these auxiliaries to our service was felt from its very beginning. Chapel services were connected with our ministry within four weeks of its commencement, and they have been continued to this day. These chapels have brought many together for worship, and religious instruction, who, we believe, would otherwise never have been brought under any religious influences. It has been thought by some, that the number of the very poor to be seen in them is smaller than might have been anticipated. This mistake is a very natural one on the part of those who are but partially, and to a small extent, acquainted with the very poor. Still it has been no uncommon thing for those who have gone to these chapels, to have borrowed the decent apparel in which they have appeared there. They were not the owners of a dress in which they would have gone to a place of social worship. Many also are kept away by circumstances of their domestic condition, which, while it is a perpetual object of this ministry to change, and to improve, can yet be changed and improved only by a very gradual, and long continued process. With our knowledge of character and condition among those whom we visit, it is not to us surprising that our chapels are not filled by the very poor. We are not, however, without an attendance even of this class upon our services, which is to ourselves for high encouragement, and great compensation for our efforts to obtain it! Our chapels, too, have served as nurseries for our churches, — or rather, for several of the churches in our city. In proportion as those of the poor who have not gone to church shall be persuaded to go, they will of

course be attracted to the societies in which they may find the strongest sympathy with their conditions and wants. Nor do we hesitate to encourage them to go wherever they shall be most disposed to go. But even where we have not been able to gather parents for worship, we have gathered their children; and through the children, have extended most important influences to parents. We have formed our Sunday Schools into juvenile congregations for worship;—in one of them, preaching peculiarly to children in the morning, and to adults in the afternoon and evening; and in the other, accommodating the services particularly to the children both in the morning and afternoon, and to adults in the evening. In this mode of procedure, we utterly disclaim all intention of innovation upon the usages of our churches. We do not propose our measures for the adoption of any. We think them, however, very important for those for whom they are intended. Our field of labor is a distinct one. It has its distinctive difficulties and advantages. And one of these advantages, and not the smallest, we think to be, the freedom and facilities we have in adapting our modes of administering our religion to the exigencies of those to whom we are to minister. We disclaim, also, all desire of having in our congregations of the young, the children of any except of the families to which we minister, and of those of the teachers in our Sunday Schools who may choose to join us in these services, and to have their children with them. If others shall attend upon these services, it will neither be at our request, nor through encouragement received from us. We may be allowed, therefore, to express the hope, and the belief, that through our chapels we may do much to form large numbers of the rising generation to far greater religious knowledge, and to a far higher religious

character, than would otherwise have been attainable by them. Nothing more is intended by these services for the young, than an adaptation of our preaching to their capacities. We preach to them of all the great practical truths and principles of the scriptures, and we endeavor to awaken and to maintain their *interest* in these truths and principles. And it is abundantly proved, that children may be greatly interested in religious teaching; and in teaching as important for the conduct of life, as any which may be addressed to adults. No one can fail to feel how very great will be the gain, by every stage which shall be made in an excitement in the young of a desire of religious knowledge, and in early efforts for a religious character. We would as yet speak in no strong terms of this part of our plan of action for the young. It is indeed but one, though to ourselves one of the most promising, of the methods by which we are aiming to form of the rising, a better than the risen generation of those to whom we minister.

The results of our ministry, like our modes of operations in it, are very unimposing. It must be so in any stage of moral results. The best ordered and happiest city, like the best ordered and happiest family, or neighborhood, will offer little to the observer to excite surprise, or exclamation. Yet to one who should ask for such visible results as we can give of our service, we would first remind him of the recent growth of our city, and then refer him to the teachers in our public schools upon the question, whether truancy has not been sensibly diminished in them within the last few years? We refer him to the records of our courts, and to our officers of police upon the question, whether juvenile delinquency has not been lessened among us? We refer him to the families most competent to a judgment upon the question, of the

increase or decrease of beggary, whether there was half as much beggary in the city during the last year, or the last two years, as there was five or six years ago? We refer him to the agents of our Benevolent Societies upon the question, whether there is not a very perceptible improvement of condition and character among considerable numbers of their Beneficiaries? Thus far we refer to testimony, because it is at hand; and because we are willing that our ministry should be brought to the test of facts, as far as moral results are susceptible of proof from facts. We know, indeed, that there are those who demand other visible results than these. They would see churches springing up from, and growing out of this ministry, as the proper evidence of demand for its maintenance. And to such we would say, that five churches, or congregations of worshippers, are connected with this ministry.* But we would say also, that our hope and trust in this respect is far less in those, who, through long and utter moral neglect have been formed under every adverse influence, and established in every adverse habit, than in a new generation to be formed under our ministry. The results, however, with which we are ourselves most impressed, are those which ask not for observation. Influences are exerted; springs of evil are more or less closed, or purified; consolations, encouragements, and various incidental moral aids are given; suffering is alleviated, and virtue and happiness are advanced; — and the only visible results are, humble industry, temperance, order, quiet, and the peaceful discharge of duty. Yet

* Dr. Eaton's, Hall over 46 Washington Street; Mr. Gray's, Friend Street; Mr. Barnard's, Warren Street; Mr. Wright's, Buttolph Street; and Dr. Brown's, Ward Room of Franklin School House.

even in these cases, the actual results to society are as real as to the individuals immediately concerned in them. We repeat, however, that we would speak modestly upon this topic. Yet we cannot speak ambiguously upon it, because we feel and know that God has honored us as instruments of great good. That good, and all we hope, is from Him. To Him, then, be all the praise both now and forever !

It is alike the desire of the Ministry at Large, and of the Fraternity, that this ministry should not be numbered with our eleemosynary institutions. It is, however, a service in which it cannot be that we should not be contributors to the temporal necessities of those who are the subjects of it. Every christian church feels, and acknowledges the duty, within certain limits, of administering temporal aid to its poor members ; and it would be quite impossible that the Ministers at Large, a considerable part of whose services extends to individuals and families very much lower in condition than is that of the families connected with our religious societies, to minister to these individuals and families from week to week, for the great moral objects of the gospel, and at the same time to do nothing, be the demand what it may, for their temporal and physical necessities. No one could go with us through the visits of a day, and not perceive that exigencies must arise, in which a temporary assistance must either be given by ourselves, or obtained by us from some other source. This assistance we are happy to say is actually obtained by us, to a great extent, from our Benevolent Societies. Since the formation of the Association of Delegates from these societies, not only are they made acquainted with each other's operations, and thus secured against any considerable interference with each other,

but they have done much to aid us in making our service a more purely moral one than it otherwise could have been. Still we are desirous that it may be distinctly understood that we must be, and that we wish to be, to a certain extent, dispensers of alms. Nor is it only, or principally, because we cannot witness such necessities as we are called to witness in the aged, the feeble, the sick, the suffering of our fellow-beings under various circumstances, and act as their counsellors, their christian ministers and friends, and ourselves do nothing for them under the pressing wants of the very hour when they are asking for our sympathy and guidance. A far higher principle is here concerned. It is our *duty*, in some of these cases, personally to aid these sufferers. Their necessities are known to us. They are *seen* by us. It may be, that very prompt relief is required, and not without considerable difficulty to be obtained from another source. It may also be, that its administration by ourselves, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, will be an important means of inspiring confidence in our sympathy, and of giving impression and efficacy to our counsels. But enough upon this subject. We glance at it, that we may bring before our friends our actual position in respect to eleemosynary services.

On the subject of almsgiving we beg leave to suggest, that a considerable good would be obtained, a considerable step would be taken towards a christian provision for the poor, if every church, or christian congregation in the city, would so faithfully take upon themselves the charge of all the poor who shall statedly worship with them, as wholly to supersede the necessity of alms for such poor persons, except from themselves. In the cases of application to us for aid by those who regularly worship in any

of our churches, we refer the applicants to their ministers. We mention this circumstance, because we wish our practice in regard to it to be known. It is not to be doubted, that ministers who shall have the means in this respect of taking charge of the poor members of their congregations, will be glad to take it; and we should ourselves be grateful if any influence of ours may in any measure contribute to their means for this object.

We have said that our ministry has for its specific purpose, the widest possible extension of the means and blessings of Christianity among those not connected with our religious societies. And we repeat, that we should rejoice,—that no one could rejoice more than we should in any measures for this purpose, by which the necessity of this ministry should be wholly superseded. But till some better provision shall be made, we think a similar ministry is demanded for large numbers, who are similarly situated in every considerable city of our country. We suppose that Boston, in proportion to its population, is as well supplied with churches, and with a regular and recognised ministry, as New York, or Philadelphia, or Baltimore. Yet we believe that not less than one third of the families of our protestant population, exclusive of the decidedly infidel portion of it, have little or no connexion with our churches, or places of worship; or with their ministers, except to a very small extent when suffering under severe illnesses, or for the performance of funeral rites. In view of these facts, then, we would appeal to the churches in our city, and if we had a voice which would reach so far, we would appeal to all the churches of our country and of Christendom, whether the time has not arrived, when the question should be one of paramount concern to these churches, are there no im-

provements which may be made in the constitution of churches, or in the administration of our religion, by which the influences of Christianity may be increased and extended, as they never have been in cities? We can conceive of no interest beyond the bounds of these churches, which has equal claims upon them as churches of Christ, with that which should be felt in the religious and moral condition of the large numbers around them, and in their very neighborhoods, who have no church; who regularly engage in no acts of social worship; to whom our religious institutions are neither for personal instruction, or a bond of union with us; and to many of whom Sunday, instead of bringing accessions of moral strength, and ministering to personal and domestic virtue and happiness, furnishes the leisure to be found on no other day for vicious indulgences, in which it may be that more than half the earnings of every other day of the week are expended. Is that, we ask, the sensibility which should be felt to the value of Christian privileges, of our privileges as members of a Christian church, or of a religious society, which, in view of the fact that a quarter, or it may be that a third of the protestant population of a community, our own community, our own city, is by any cause or causes excluded from these privileges, or living without the advantages of them, and which yet neither prompts us to do any thing, or excites our solicitude that any thing should be done, for the widest possible extension of these privileges to those who are without them? We do not indeed forget that we have now seven ministers at large in our city. We are devoutly gratified to God for the sympathy which has been extended to our cause. Yet this sympathy is by no means what it should be. We speak for the cause, and not for ourselves. We

speak in reference to the support of others in it, and not of ourselves. We hope also that we may be permitted to say, that we think there are few means by which greater vitality may be given to the religious principle in our churches, or religious societies, by which more may be done to enlarge these societies both in numbers, and in all the virtues of the Christian character, than by an excitement and exercise in them of that sympathy in these objects, which will make it in each of them a matter of primary concern, that, as far as possible, to the poor and the poorest among us the gospel of Christ shall be preached. Nothing is more important for the growth of the religious principle in churches, as well as in individuals, than a truly Christian sympathy with the necessities, the crying demands of human ignorance, and weakness, and want, and suffering, and moral exposure in all its varieties of kind and of forms. May this sympathy increase and extend among us, till it shall pervade all hearts : till each one shall recognise in every one his brother ; and until, amidst all diversities of outward condition, and of speculative opinions, we shall all be one in Christ Jesus.*

* We would most respectfully call upon the churches of the different denominations in our city, to direct immediate attention to the objects and claims of the ministry at large. We think that this ministry should be connected, as it now is not, with the ministry in our churches. Through this connexion, much might be done for the cause of our religion both within, and without these churches, or religious societies. If a single Society shall feel itself unable to make a suitable provision for a minister at large, why might not two, or three Societies unite for this object, elect their minister, and give him their sympathy and co-operation ? Or if religious congregations cannot thus act together, may not a small society be formed from the members of two or three congregations,

Our service during the last six months has gone on with very little interruption ; and with no other change, than that the charge of the Office of the Visitors of the Poor has devolved exclusively upon the senior minister. The junior ministers have thus been enabled to give their time more exclusively to active service. Our wish and endeavor has been to be faithful. Through the munificence of a number of the friends of our ministry, a spacious and well adapted chapel has been erected for Mr. Barnard, which will probably within a few days be dedicated with appropriate services. Within the building which contains the chapel are rooms in which Mr. Barnard will reside. His home, therefore, will be in the midst of those to whom he ministers. The building contains also four commodious school rooms. Within the next summer we shall have a new chapel also for Mr. Gray. A large part of the sum necessary for its erection has been subscribed. We cannot, therefore, but avail ourselves of this opportunity, most gratefully to acknowledge the kindness which has been extended to us. During the last six months, Mr. Barnard has had 230 fami-

of which society the pastors of these congregations should always be members ? The requisite funds would thus be easily obtained, and the semi-annual Reports of the minister, distributed to every family of these congregations, would secure at once the permanence of their sympathy, and the maintenance of this institution. The proper instruments for this service are obtainable, if they shall be really *wanted*. Here, as in the grosser concerns of life, demand, if it be what it should be, will not fail to obtain supply. But God will have us *ask*,—and ask because we *want*,—if we would hope to receive. He would have us *seek*, if we would find. And if, with such expositions as have been given of the condition of our city, in respect to the numbers who are without the pale of our churches, no want shall be felt, and no demand shall be uttered,—where will lie the responsibility ?

lies under his pastoral charge. In these families were comprised 367 adults, and 561 children ; or, 1018 individuals. Of this number, 11 adults have died since the last July, and 19 children. Within the same time, 16 adults and 39 children have left the city ; and six children and four adults have been transferred to the charge of Mr. Gray. 28 children and 5 adults, who live in the section of the city in which Dr. Brown ministers, have been transferred to his care ; 5 adults have gone to sea, and 2 are insane.—In consequence of a temporary suspension of his labors from illness, the number of families under the charge of Mr. Gray has been less since the last July, than it was in the preceding six months. This number is 181 ; comprising 308 adults and 442 children. In these families, 9 adults have died, and 11 children ; and 2 adults are insane. We have great pleasure in being able to inform you that Dr. Brown, of the Christian Denomination, who entered upon the Ministry at Large in the last summer, and whose district comprehends the portion of the city south of Dover Street, has labored with good effect there. He has gathered a congregation of those who are wholly unconnected with any religious society. This congregation assembles for worship in the ward room of the Franklin school house. We will only add, that our work, to us, is of ever increasing interest. It is for Christ in the poor. We commend it, therefore, to the prayers of our friends, and to the blessing of the common Father of the rich and the poor.

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,
CHARLES F. BARNARD,
FREDERICK T. GRAY.

Boston, January 1st, 1836.

NOTE.—Within the last six months we have heard of one or two persons who have gone from house to house for alms, and who have represented themselves to have been sent to those to whom they have thus applied by one of the Ministers at Large. We wish therefore to give the information most distinctly, that *not one of the Ministers at Large ever authorizes any one to ask for alms of any kind in his name, or as sent by him.* Should either of us ever refer an applicant for alms to any one, the application will be made in writing. Any one, therefore, who shall make a verbal application of this kind, may by this circumstance be known to be a deceiver. Each of us will be obliged for information of any one by whom his name shall be so employed.



THE
SECOND ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CENTRAL BOARD
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY
OF CHURCHES.



BOSTON,
ISAAC R. BUTTS, SCHOOL STREET.
1836.

REPORT.

IN presenting their Second Annual Report, the Central Board beg leave to offer to the Fraternity, such a statement of their doings, since the last Anniversary, as will enable it to judge of the present condition and prospects of the Association.

They then propose to submit a few remarks upon the general subject of a ministry at large ;— with the view of bringing the wants and claims of the less favored classes in our community, more directly into notice, and of producing, in the public mind, a deeper conviction of their magnitude and importance.

By reference to the Constitution, it appears, that the object which the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches has in view, is the “ Improvement of the Moral State of the Poor and Irreligious of this city ;” and that this object is proposed to be effected, “ by the support of a Ministry at Large, and by such other means, as may be calculated to produce a wholesome influence upon the character.” In consequence, however, of the very limited amount of funds within the control of the Central Board, the operations of the Fraternity have, as yet, been principally confined to

the support of the Ministry. In the last Annual Report the hope was expressed, that the receipts of the coming year would amount to the sum of \$5000. There is no doubt that such a sum could be judiciously and beneficially expended ; but your Board regret to state, that the actual receipts of the present year, have, in fact, fallen short of those of the last by about \$160 ; the whole amount received by the Treasurer, being the sum of \$2320,98. In this state of things, nothing farther has been attempted by the Board, than the payment of the salaries of the three ministers, and the publication of their two Semi-annual Reports. No new measures have been adopted, nor any special action taken, upon those which have already gone into operation. By these remarks, the Board do not intend to imply, that the Fraternity is in a less prosperous condition than at the last Anniversary. They ascribe the slight deficiency in the subscriptions principally, to the circumstance, that, the Fraternity having been organized, and gone into successful operation, the attention of the different members of the Associated Societies, has been less closely drawn to the subject than heretofore. Your Committee are satisfied, that the zeal and fidelity of the ministry, have been at no time more praiseworthy, nor more abounding in proofs of the importance and utility of their labors. They believe, too, that the cause is gradually strengthening and extending itself in the community. A strong interest is expressed in its success, and a greater willingness evinced, to make pecuniary sacrifices for its sake ; especially among the active and less wealthy classes. There is, also, abundant cause for congratulation and thankfulness, in the spirit in which the poor themselves, receive the ministrations of

those who are sent among them. The spirit, is uniformly, one of kindness and respectful attention. They are awakening to a deeper sense of their spiritual wants, and are becoming more and more anxious, to listen to the great truths, which are alone calculated to produce radical changes in their character and condition. The two Chapels and Sunday Schools are well filled, during the day, and, in the evening, they are overflowing. In the Northern section of the city, the increase of worshippers has been remarkable, of late. For one or two evenings past, many have been obliged to retire, for want of accommodations. A much larger audience could be collected; indeed, it is understood, that about seventy families, are waiting, only for accommodations, to become regular attendants. Your Committee, therefore, are of opinion, that nothing is wanting to give this Ministry that settled and permanent character, which is essential to its efficacy and final success, but a greater zeal on the part of the Fraternity, and a larger provision for its immediate and pressing wants. And they take pleasure in stating to the Association, that a plan is already in progress, for the erection of a larger and more favorably situated chapel, at the north part of the city. It is undertaken by a few friends of the Ministry, and must depend, for its success, entirely, upon the voluntary contributions of individuals. Subscriptions, to a considerable amount, have already been procured, and a lot of land, on the lower part of Pitts Street, of sufficient size, has been purchased. Owing to the very high price of building materials, at the present time, a larger sum, than was at first contemplated, will be necessary to complete the edifice. The Board, however, are confident, that the zeal and liberality, which

has been so strikingly displayed, in the commencement of the work, will not be exhausted, by any further calls, that may be necessary for its completion. The object has our best wishes and prayers for its success; and, we most cheerfully commend it to the Fraternity, and the public, as one in every respect, deserving of their careful attention and hearty coöperation.

We pass, now, to make a few remarks upon the general subject of a Ministry at Large. The objects contemplated by this Ministry, are altogether of a moral character; and must, therefore, be brought about by influences, which are slow and quiet in their operation, and difficult of estimation in their progress. You cannot always say of them, "lo! here, or lo! there." Like the gentle influences of light and heat in the physical world, they penetrate the inmost recesses of the soul, and afford the nutriment which occasions its growth; but we are not able, at any given time, to measure the quantity, or perceive the mode of operation. Notwithstanding the obviousness of these remarks, a strange skepticism prevails, to a wide extent, with respect to the efficacy of moral efforts, in producing important changes in the condition and character of society. "Show us the evidence of good effected," is the constant question, even in our day. Men ask for something palpable and striking; something which they may see and feel; and shake their heads in doubt when told, in reply, that such proofs are not to be had or expected. It may, therefore, not be entirely out of place, to advert for a moment, to some of the benefits to society which result from a Ministry to the Poor.

And, in the first place, we remark, that such a Ministry is greatly promotive of the interests of the wealthier

classes of society. The character of the poor for virtue and integrity has, generally, been regarded as of minor importance, — excepting in the eye of Christian philanthropy. And, in most countries, it is too true, that they have had but a very indirect influence upon the welfare of the rich and powerful.

We have not time now to go into this subject ; but will simply remark that, however the case may be, elsewhere, the political safety and security of the wealthier classes, in this country, is not only greatly affected by the moral character of the poor, but rests mainly upon it. The stability of our General and State governments, the efficacy of our common and statute laws, — the security of property, and, in fact, the possession and exercise of all our public and private rights, are, evidently, very much in the hands of what in Europe are called the poorer classes. They hold the votes, they wield the power ; and a fearful one it will prove, unless directed by moral and religious principle. If interest, then, can bind men to each other, surely all the energies of the wealthy should be directed to affording encouragement and support to well-conducted efforts for the improvement of the moral state of the poor.

A ministry at large tends to lessen materially the calls upon the wealthy for charitable disbursements. Pauperism, it is well known, is the child of immorality. In our city, it is emphatically so. We do not mean to say, that there are no cases of destitution, proceeding from causes wholly beyond the control of the party concerned ; there are many such. But we do mean to declare and maintain, that, if there was a high principle of virtue operating in the mind ; if ignorance, intemperance, licentiousness, extravagance, and a nameless host of other

vicious and degrading propensities, were not, forever, enfeebling and destroying the energies of men ; — poverty would be confined to the innocently sick, and the desperately unfortunate.

Now, the ministry at large acts directly upon these vices, and the evidence is not wanting that they have acted efficiently. The records of our benevolent societies show that dependence upon alms has diminished within four or five years, — not relatively, but positively. The character and condition of considerable numbers, somewhat removed from extreme poverty, has also essentially improved. Our municipal courts of justice have, it is understood, fewer cases of Juvenile Delinquency upon their dockets. We do not contend that these effects are wholly to be ascribed to the influence of the ministry, but we have ample testimony to show that its agency, in this respect, has been very decided.

The ministry also tends to break down the barriers which separate different classes of society ; and this, indeed, was one of the main objects for which the Fraternity was organized in its present form. Constituted as our churches now are, there is evidently but little opportunity for the gathering in of any considerable number of the poor with other worshippers. It was thought that this mode of organization would obviate the objection, and bring about a connexion between the two classes highly advantageous to each. We trust the point will not be lost sight of ; for we are confident that nothing but a thorough knowledge of each other, is wanting, to inspire those feelings of sympathy, respect, and brotherly love, which are essential to all moral advancement, and which Christianity demands.

But it is not solely, or chiefly, on account of the benefits that would result to the wealthy, that we advocate

the support of a ministry at large. The blessings which it confers upon the poor, forms, undoubtedly, its strongest claim to our attention and protection. It has been said truly, — that the greatest wants and distresses of the poor do not arise from hunger, nor thirst, nor cold, nor any other physical calamity. It may be added, that the bestowment of food, and clothing, and habitation, to the full supply of the demands of the body, will not, in most cases, even relieve those wants.

Furnish a poor man's family with every necessary of life, and furnish it abundantly, and you do but comparatively little for him ; it may be, you increase his distresses in a tenfold degree. No ! his poverty has been produced by habits of sensuality, or intemperance ; by ignorance, or neglect of the rules of prudence and sound judgment ; by bad examples, and bad education ; by a low mind, and violent and head-strong passions : and you can no more change his condition by any external applications you may make, whether of food or clothing, than you can alter the innate properties of matter by the contrivances of art. Is he then to be deserted, and left without protection ? By no means. You can do much for him. You can give him your sympathy and advice. You can tell him, you are his friend. He may, indeed, start at the sound, — but he will not refuse to listen to it. You can open his eyes to the blessings which are around him. You can speak to him of the great Author of all, and can convince his understanding that the bounties of his providence were intended for him, as well as for you. You can inform him on what conditions these are to be obtained, and can ask him to point out to you the cases in which honesty, industry, sobriety and prudence, if united, have failed to obtain their just reward. You may

do more. You may speak to him of his own soul ; its capabilities and destiny ; the influence and design of the trials of life upon its character and happiness ; and the importance of virtue and religion to its well being and progress, both here and hereafter.

If you can succeed in gaining his attention, to all or any of these truths, and, especially, if you can induce him to carry them out into his daily habits and practice, — you will, in all human probability, raise him in physical condition to a state of independence ; and, if not, you will enable him to contend with the ills to which he is subjected, in a spirit that will lighten his sorrows, and increase his happiness.

These are a few of the advantages conferred upon society by a ministry at large. But, it may be said in reply : “ We admit all this. The influences of the ministry are very important, but, after all, they are of limited extent. The number upon whom they can operate is small, and the provision already made to render them effectual, is sufficiently liberal.” Now we apprehend that all such suggestions are founded in mistake. In our opinion, the numbers who enjoy no advantages from public worship, and who rightfully belong to this ministry, is not small but large ;— large beyond previous suspicion.

By reference to the last Semi-annual Report of the ministry at large, it will be seen that a computation has been made by them, from which it appears that there are 28,000 persons in Boston, who are not under the pastoral charge of the ministers of our churches. It is important to observe, that this computation is not intended to show the numbers which do, or do not, attend church ; but solely the numbers which are known, by our ministers,

to belong to their respective religious societies. Many, undoubtedly, occasionally attend public worship, who have no regular connexion with our churches, and are under no pastoral care. There may possibly be some fallacy in the above computation, which would materially affect the result. Of this, however, your Board wish every individual to form a judgment for himself, which he can easily do, as all the elements of the calculation are given in the Report alluded to. In cases of this kind, perfectly accurate estimates are not to be expected, and are even unnecessary. For if, instead of 28,000 persons, who have no regular connexion with any church, and are under no pastoral care, — we suppose that there are only 18,000, or even 15,000, and we have not the least doubt that this last number is within the truth, the argument from numbers remains in its full force.

How far then, we ask, and we ask it solemnly, does the moral and religious provision made by *this Fraternity* meet the wants of even 15,000 individuals? Is there no call for more ministers, and more chapels? Is the population so fully supplied, that any increase of these appliances, must of necessity, draw off worshippers from the regular societies? The Fraternity has now three clergymen engaged in its service, and they have two Chapels and two Sunday Schools, for the accommodation of the poor on the sabbath; and this is all. It may be remarked, also, that two of the gentlemen, now employed, receive only four hundred dollars each for their yearly services; and that, if, in the events of Providence, it should so happen that we should be deprived of their labors, — the present state of the funds would be wholly inadequate to supply their places. For it cannot reasonably be supposed, that any other individuals could be found, who would be able,

or willing, to perform such laborious services for so small a consideration. Now, the whole number of individuals, who can be received at our two Chapels and Sunday Schools, cannot be computed at over 1500. And yet the remark sometimes is : "it is enough. Further provision for the poor is unnecessary."

Your Committee hope that they have said enough to convince every unprejudiced mind, that the claims of the Ministry to the Poor to the sympathy of the Fraternity, and the public, are of a wide and commanding character ; that this Ministry ought to be encouraged and sustained in a spirit of liberality and hearty good will ; and that a loud and pressing call is upon all and each of us for greater exertions, and a more extensive plan of operations, than has yet been made. They trust that minor differences of opinion will be disregarded, and that the great work, of bringing the ministration of our religion within the reach of the thousands of our fellow-citizens who are now deprived of it, will be taken up and carried on, with the spirit and energy, which its importance and difficulty demand. Let us repose entire confidence in the efficacy of moral efforts to effect great changes in the human heart and character, when properly directed. And, in all our labors, let us seek light and strength from Him who has promised to assist those, who faithfully employ the means within their reach, and submit the issue to his wisdom and goodness, in the spirit of Christian faith and humility.

All which is respectfully submitted by your Committee.

H. B. ROGERS, *Secretary*.

Boston, April 7, 1836.

FOURTH

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MINISTERS AT LARGE,

ADDRESSED TO

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

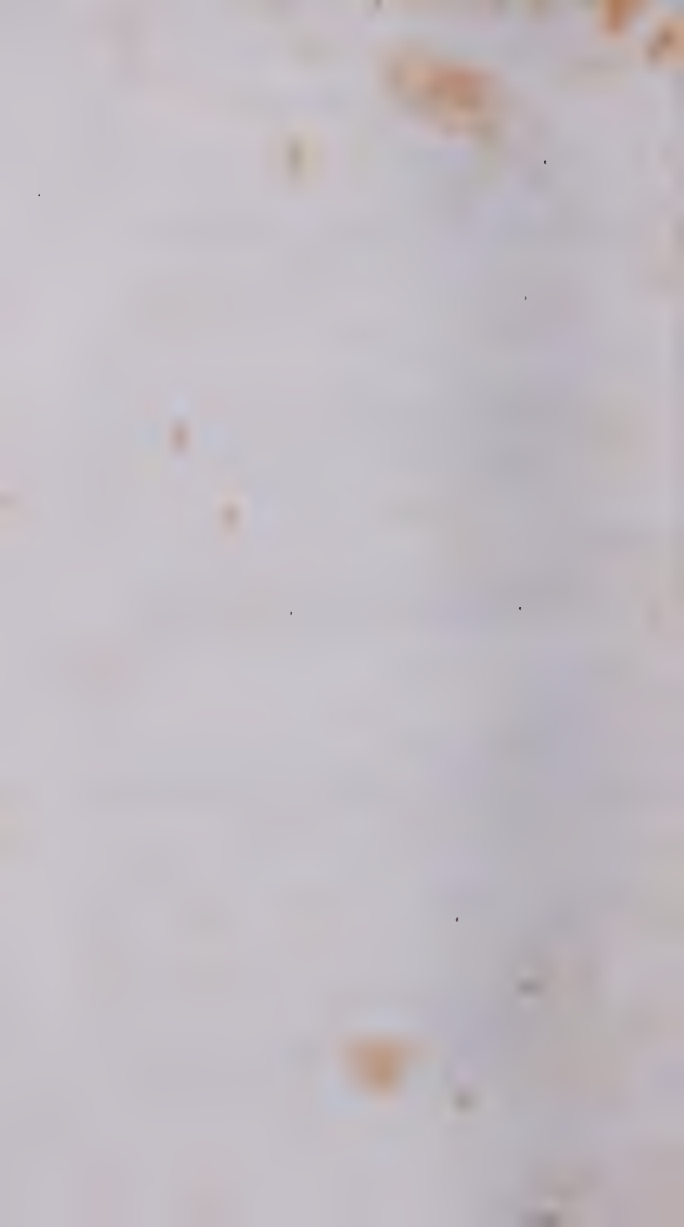
OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:

I. R. BUTTS, NO. 2, SCHOOL STREET.

1836.



REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

GENTLEMEN, — In our last Semi-annual Report, we brought before you “our views of the demand for a Ministry at Large in our city, grounded upon the nearest approximation we could make to the number of families which, without this, or some other provision, will be without a ministry.” In that Report we gave all the elements of the calculation by which we were brought to the result there laid before you. Yet we have heard, repeatedly, that there must be some fallacy in our statement upon this subject; and a strong regret has been expressed, that such an exposition of our ecclesiastical state as we have there given should have been sent abroad by us. We have, therefore, thought it our duty carefully to review this statement, and we would now lay before you what we conceive to have been the whole amount of our error upon the subject.

We charge ourselves, then, with a want of due distinctness and definiteness of expression, in a case in which our expressions should have been as clear as language could have made them. For example, we say, “we have 7,698 families *connected with our religious so-*

cieties ;” and “5,622 families, or 28,110 individuals of our Protestant population, *who are in no regular connexion with our churches.*” And again, “we believe that *not less than one third of our Protestant population, independent of the infidel portion of it, have little or no connexion with our churches, or places of worship, or with the ministers of these churches, except to a very small extent when suffering under severe illness, or for the performance of funeral rites.*” Now we readily admit that there is looseness and vagueness in this phraseology ; and our only apology for it is, that within half a dozen lines of the expressions, “5,622 families *are in no regular connexion with our churches,*” we had spoken of this very class as “*not under the pastoral charge of the ministers of our churches.*” The object of our calculations was, the nearest approximation to be made to the number *not known to be under any pastoral charge.* Will you allow us then, in as few words as we may employ for the purpose, to repeat our statement, with the correction here suggested of its phraseology ?

“Let it be assumed that we have fifty Protestant religious societies in the city, and fifty places for Protestant worship. From answers received to a Circular addressed to all the ministers of our churches, it has been ascertained, that the number of families *known to be in the pastoral charge of twenty-five of our ministers,* is 3,849 ; which gives to each of them, upon an average, 154 families. If, then, we shall allow 154 families to each of the other twenty-five religious societies, shall we not have the full number which may fairly be supposed to be *in the pastoral charge of the ministers of our fifty Protestant places of worship ?* Let this be admitted, *and we*

shall have 7,698 families known to be under this pastoral charge. It is, however, also ascertained, that our present population is 78,603, of which we may suppose that 12,000 are Catholics. We have then a Protestant population of 66,603; which, at five to a family, gives us 13,320 Protestant families. Deduct, then, *the 7,698 families known to be under a pastoral charge*, from the 13,320 of our Protestant families, and the result is, that we have 5,622 families which are *not under the regular pastoral charge of the ministers of our fifty Protestant places of worship.*" This is our statement as we should have given it. It was intended to relate exclusively to the question of the numbers which are, and which are not, *known to be under a pastoral charge.* If a nearer approximation to truth on this subject can be obtained, no one will rejoice in it more than we shall. But if this, or any other exposition of our ecclesiastical state, goes to show that our religious institutions are but defectively accomplishing their proper objects, and if changes are required in them, or additions are to be made to them, that God may be glorified as he should be by the administration of the Gospel among us, let us fearlessly open our eyes and hearts to facts and duties in the case. Great is the work, we believe, to which God has called us in our ministry; and we would set ourselves modestly, but earnestly and diligently to its accomplishment.

We are desirous to offer this correction of our statement, because not only have very erroneous inferences been made from it, but it has even been said in one or more of our religious periodicals, that our "printed Report implies that there is not provision in

our places of worship for more than one half of the persons of all ages who constitute families ;” “ that one half the population of Boston are destitute of the means of grace ; and that 40,000 are unsupplied with places of worship.” Of such *abuses* of our language as these, we can only say, that we feel no accountableness for them. We can only feel *pity* for a mind which is capable of them. We are not, however, much surprised that it should have been supposed by some, that in speaking of the numbers not under any pastoral charge, and in no regular connexion with our churches, we considered this whole number as altogether without the pale of the influences of our churches. We beg leave, however, to say, that we never, for a moment, considered them so. We well knew, when we published the statement which has been so much misunderstood, that many often go to church, who have yet no regular connexion with any place of worship, and who are known to no minister as subjects of his pastoral charge. We knew that large numbers of those whom we have been accustomed to visit, as proper subjects of our own ministry, have occasionally gone to some church on Sunday. Yet they have known no minister as *their minister* ; and no minister knew them as members of his society. In answer to our inquiry, in our first visit to families, “ where do you go to church ?” the answer generally is, “ to such or such a church ;” or, “ *when* we go, we go to such or such a church.” The fact is, that very few, except those in the very lowest condition, are willing to admit that they have no religious connexion with society around them. The importance of this connexion is very extensively felt among us. But when we ask, “ do you *know* Mr. A., or Mr. B. ? or does he ever *visit you* ?”

the reply is, "no." And in these cases, we consider the individual, or family, as proper subjects of our charge, as Ministers at Large. In nineteen of these cases out of twenty, at least, there can be no very effective administration of our religion, except in their families. Christian influences can be brought to bear with any strength upon them, only through pastoral intercourse and instruction. To a very small extent will they seek these influences for themselves by personal application to ministers; and their attendance upon church, though occasional, is in truth very, very rare and irregular. We did not, however, attempt to ascertain the number which might be considered as *church goers*, either constantly or occasionally, in contradistinction to those who never go to church, for the very simple reason, that we knew of no means by which we might arrive at any satisfactory result upon this subject. But we thought it practicable to arrive at some probability in an estimate of the numbers who are, and of those who are not, *known to be under a pastoral charge*; and this was all that we attempted. Nor, even in this estimate, did we assume to be exact. Our aim was, the nearest possible approximation to truth. We availed ourselves of this computation, only as one of the means of showing that there is a wide field for the exercise of our ministry. And if there be any approximation to truth in our computation of the number not under the pastoral charge of the ministers of our churches, we cannot but think ourselves quite secure against any charge of extravagance, even should we use far stronger expressions than any we have yet employed, in asserting and pleading the claims of our service.

It is very desirable that as exact knowledge as possible should be obtained of the actual ecclesiastical condition of cities. We believe that there is much misapprehension prevalent upon this subject; and that a better knowledge of facts in the case may lead to very important, and beneficial results. Many, we know, were startled at our suggestion of the number among ourselves, who are not under the pastoral charge of any of the ministers of our churches. We do not, however, believe Boston, in point of religious and moral character, to be a whit behind any other city of equal population. In our opinion, there is not a large city in our country, — we say nothing here of the cities of other countries, — in which it might not be most satisfactorily shown, that more than a quarter, and probably more than a third of its inhabitants, have no regular connexion with its places of worship; and that, to a fearfully large number of its inhabitants, Sunday is anything but a day for religious and moral improvement. But how is satisfactory information to be obtained upon this subject? Our statement was intended to bring out one important fact, namely, the numbers in our city which are fairly to be supposed to be under the pastoral charge of no one of the ministers of our churches; and we confidently appeal to that statement for the fairness of our inference in the case. Time and inquiry may bring to light other facts equally important in their bearing upon our religious interests. We hope, however, we may be allowed to say, that the calculations and reasonings are at best but very delusive, from which it is inferred, that because there are ample accommodations in the churches of a city for the whole number that may be expected from Sunday to

Sunday to be at church, therefore no further provision is required than for an effective administration of our religion. Dr. Chalmers has stated, — and we are quite willing to admit the fact, — that not more than two fifths of the population of any place are to be expected to be at church. The remaining three fifths are made up of infants, of the feeble and sick, of the aged, of nurses in employment, and of all who are required to be at home that others may be abroad. Taking, then, the numbers given in our last Report, let it be supposed that our population is 78,603 ; that we have 12,000 Roman Catholics ; and that our Protestant population is 66,603. We have, also, beside those of the Ministry at Large, fifty places for Protestant worship. Two fifths of our Protestant population amount to 26,640. This, is, therefore, the number for which accommodations are wanted in our churches. Our fifty churches, then, must each, upon an average, have accommodations for 532 worshippers. It is, however, also to be considered, that, at different seasons of the year, we have from 3 or 4 to 6 or 8,000 strangers, or visitors in the city, a considerable portion of whom, from principle, or habit, or curiosity, may wish to go to church. It would seem fair, therefore, to assume, that we should have accommodations in our churches for 3 or 4,000 more than are to be expected to be there from our own families. Nor does any one, in the purchase or renting of his pew, ever think of making provision only for two fifths of his family ; because, although in general not more than this provision would be required, yet often three fifths, and sometimes four fifths of families are at church. Suppose, then, it could be shown, that we actually have in our churches accommodations for 30,000

worshippers. Is it, therefore, to be inferred that church-going is what it should be among us? On the contrary, we say, it is very possible there may be churches, or places of worship enough in a city, and more than enough to accommodate all that can go to church there, and yet that even a third of the inhabitants of that city may have, at best, but a very irregular connexion with those churches, or with their ministers. It may be, that while some of these churches shall, from Sunday to Sunday, contain large congregations, others shall have in them but few worshippers in proportion to their accommodations. People go to church, not because seats are abundant, but because there is something to attract in the preacher, or because there is a want in their own souls of the means of religion. We might even multiply our churches till there shall be accommodations in them for twice the number that can go to church, and yet very little may thus be done to increase church-going among us. Or, we may not have accommodations in them for more than three fourths of those who should go to church, while yet a large proportion of the pews of several of these churches may, for successive years be on sale, or to be rented. No inference then can be made from the number of churches in a city to invalidate our conclusion.*

* At the second public meeting of the London City Mission Society, held in the great room, Exeter Hall, May 16th, 1836, it was stated by the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, that "in addition to what had been stated by preceding speakers, and especially by the honorable gentleman who occupied the chair, he would add what been stated by the Bishop of London, in a letter which his Lordship had just published." The following was the statement:—"In London, and its suburbs, including the parishes on either bank of

Where towns and cities are divided by parish lines, as they are in England and Scotland, and wherever any

the Thames, there are four parishes, or districts, each having a population exceeding 20,000, and containing an aggregate of 166,000 persons, with church room for 8,200, not quite one twentieth of the whole, and only eleven clergymen. There are twenty-one others, the aggregate population of which is 739,000, while the church room is for 66,155; not one tenth of the whole, and only forty-five clergymen. There are nine others, with an aggregate population of 232,000, and church room for 27,327; not one eighth of the whole, and only nineteen clergymen. The entire population of these thirty-four parishes, amounts to 1,137,000, while there is church room only for 101,682. Supposing that church room is required for one third, there ought to be sittings for 379,000 persons. There is, therefore, a deficiency of 277,318 sittings; or if we allow 25,000 for the number of sittings in proprietary chapels, the deficiency will be 252,318." Hence, he had authority for stating, that there was the utmost need for exertions such as the Society was making. There could be no doubt, that, as Christian men, they were bound to aim at meeting the deficiency which had been so fully exposed; the only question was, How were they to meet it? Various means had been devised. The first to which he would allude, was a proposition contained in his Lordship's pamphlet, — that of the erection of at least fifty additional churches, in the furtherance of which object the Bishop had himself made the princely contribution of £2,000. Most earnestly did he wish that the benevolent expectations of the donor might be more than realized! But supposing that the fifty churches were raised, and that each of them contained about 2,000 persons, a number too large for ordinary voices and constitutions, they would only afford accommodation for 100,000 persons, out of the enormous deficiency which had been noticed in the Commissioners' Report, so that there would still be need of something further. Nor should he omit to add, that *the erection of those churches was no security that they would be filled; there must still be an aggression on the population that surrounded them, in order that they might be reclaimed to church-going habits.*

form of religion is established by law, there, indeed, having ascertained the number of inhabitants belonging to a parish, and the number of those for whom accommodation is to be provided in its churches, it is very easy to determine whether or not any increase of these accommodations is required, that all within the lines of the parish may find accommodation for themselves within the bosom of the established church. And this is the object to which Dr. Chalmers applies his calculation of two fifths of the inhabitants of a parish as the number to be expected to be at church from Sunday to Sunday. But with us, where there is no form of religion established by law, and where there are no parish lines, the only use which can with any satisfaction be made of this calculation, or element of calculation is, that, when the whole number is known of individuals in the families of a congregation, or in the families under the pastoral charge of a minister, we may thus easily ascertain whether the average number is from Sunday to Sunday at church, which may reasonably be expected to be there. And should the number of any congregation from Sunday to Sunday be considerably larger than the number to be looked for from these families, it may be inferred of this additional number, that some may be strangers and visitors in the city; that some may be regularly connected with neighboring congregations; and that some may have no regular connexion with any place of worship. We have long been familiar with the calculations of Dr. Chalmers respecting church-going, &c., in his parish in Glasgow. But we have said nothing of them, simply because they seemed to us inapplicable to circumstances so different as are ours from those

of his parish, and the parishes of Scotland to which he applied them.

Our ministry ever has been, and is, intended principally for the poor. Yet we have never considered it as intended exclusively for them. Our object is, while our daily services are almost exclusively among the poor, to whom, as far as God shall enable us, we would be instruments of making Christianity all that Christ intended his religion should be to them, yet not less to avail ourselves of every means in our power of bringing about sympathy, and an identity of interests, through all the classes of the community. We have never treated, and we shall never treat the poor as *a caste*. We would do all that we may to rescue as many as possible from unnecessary dependence, and to extend among them the principles, affections and habits, which are the best means of improvement, and the best sources of happiness in every condition of human existence. We would honor the poor, because we feel that honor is due to the poorest human being. We would look upon each one with whom we are, or shall be connected in our ministry, however low his condition, as a child of God, our own father and the common father of men, and acknowledge in each one a brother. But we would also do all that we may to extend to all around us, and to the greatest number of all classes, the sentiment of Christian brotherhood. And most gratefully do we acknowledge the sympathy and coöperation which have been extended to us. We are fully sensible how much we owe to the Teachers in our

Sunday Schools. They have been, and are, most effective co-laborers with us. We could, indeed, but very defectively carry on our ministrations without them. May God reward them with his richest blessings, by giving them abundant fruit of their untiring devotion to their good work ! And to those through whose benevolence the Warren Street Chapel has been raised and opened, and the Pitts Street Chapel has been begun, we give all we can, our hearty thanks ; and our assurance that no effort on our part shall be wanting, that the ends of their bounty may be accomplished. We will only add, that our convictions were never stronger than they now are, of the claims and the importance of the Ministry at Large. Through the intimate connexion in which we live with the families of our charge, opportunities are constantly occurring of services, the most important that could be rendered to the subjects of them ; and which, we can hardly conceive, should in one case of a hundred be rendered, but through this institution. We are devoutly grateful for the privilege of being instruments in this ministry. We well know, indeed, that Christianity is not at all less important for the rich, the intelligent, the influential, than for the poor and the comparatively unenlightened. We feel the condition of that man to be most pitiable, however raised by outward advantages above those around him, by whom his own spiritual nature, and his daily growth in Christian love and righteousness, are not infinitely more desired, and valued, than all other good. But we know, too, that it was one of the objects nearest to the heart of our Master and Lord, that to the poor and the poorest, to the low and the lowest, to the despised, to the vicious and the wretched wherever

they are to be found, his Gospel should be preached, and his salvation offered. And to how many of the poor, — the literally and recognised poor, — are its influences extended from our churches? * That these classes of our fellow-beings may be blessed through the influences of the Gospel, they must therefore be *sought*; and to seek them out, and to preach to them “the glad tidings of the kingdom of God,” is our peculiar duty. We repeat, with our whole hearts, thanks be to God for the success with which he has blessed our labors. Let suitable instruments be demanded and obtained for the service, and through his ministry moral results may be secured to our social state, which Christianity only can produce, and compared with which, all mere outward prosperity is utterly worthless.

The senior Minister at Large was taken from his service by illness in the month of May, has been obliged to leave the city, and will not be able to return to it through the summer. The numbers in the

* We well know that general inferences are not to be drawn from isolated facts. Yet having recently learned a fact which has some bearing upon the connexion of the poor with our churches, we will state it without comment.

It is well known to many, that the contributions taken at the Quarterly Charity Lectures in this city, are divided among the poor of the nine churches by whose pastors these Lectures are preached. These churches are, the Old South Church, Brattle-Street Church, Berry Street Church, West Church, Second Church, New North Church, New South Church, First Church, and Hollis-Street Church. The following were the numbers of receivers of this charity in the years 1818 and 1836.

In 1818, the number of receivers in these nine churches was 264. In 1836, it was 180. In other words, there were 84 more receivers of it in 1818 than in 1836.

charge of Messrs. Barnard and Gray, are very nearly what they were at the time of our last Report, and no considerable interruption has occurred in their service.

Yours, respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,
CHARLES F. BARNARD,
FREDERICK T. GRAY.

Boston, July, 1836.

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THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CENTRAL BOARD

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:

I. R. BUTTS, SCHOOL STREET.

1837.

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REPORT.

THE Board congratulate the Fraternity upon the completion of a new and commodious chapel in Pitts Street, which was commenced early in July last, and dedicated on the thirteenth of November, with services by ministers of different denominations. It consists of two stories, the upper of which contains a Chapel, 62 feet by 40, and 20 feet high, with a gallery for the choir, and a small vestry attached. It has 76 slips, and will accommodate 560 persons. In the lower story is a Hall with circular seats for a Sunday School, 49 feet by 40, and ten feet high, sufficient for 300 pupils and teachers, and two rooms, 18 feet by 23, with book-cases for a Sunday School and Parish library, which may also be used with the school, and for Teacher's meetings. The cellar is leased for a term of years for \$150. The building has been erected by donations solicited by individuals, who when their liabilities are discharged, will convey it, in the same manner as the old Chapel, to Trustees for the Fraternity. These now amount to \$8000, but will probably be reduced to

\$5000 by the sale of the old chapel, and it is hoped will be finally liquidated without difficulty, as soon as the times shall be favorable. The interest is nearly defrayed by the rents. The cost of the building and 3,625 feet of land, was about \$16,000.

Three religious services for persons of all ages, nearly similar to those in our congregational churches are held every Sabbath. The Chapel has been so crowded, both morning and afternoon, that one seat has been added to each pew, and chairs and settees placed in the aisles.

“A more attentive and interesting congregation is not to be found in the city.” Mr Gray has adopted the plan of assigning seats to such individuals as promise to attend constantly, and he thinks that it contributes to give them a feeling of connexion with the building, which they would not otherwise have, whilst at the same time it brings them more under his notice, and enables him to judge of their attendance and interest. He has, also, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee, formed a church, and has admitted nearly 40 individuals to the rights of church membership. The audience at the Chapel consisted, on the first of January last, of about 122 families, who were regarded as permanent worshippers; or 564 persons, of which 335 are adults and 229 are children. Since that time the number has increased to 152 families, being a total of 651 individuals, or 345 adults, and 316 children. Some notion of their character may be formed from the record book, kept by Mr Gray, which shows that there are among his audience

12 Carpenters,*

2 Sailmakers,

5 Masons,

2 Firemen,

* All but two of these, are journeymen with families.

5 Wood Sawyers,	12 Washwomen,
3 Pile drivers,	26 Servants in families,
2 Well diggers,	10 Seamstresses,
5 Blacksmiths,	10 Girls in printing offices,
4 Hostlers,	3 Nurses,
4 Shoemakers,	5 Women doing slop work,
5 Truckmen,	33 Widows,
6 Handcartmen,	10 Colored persons,
8 Painters,	4 Watchmen, &c., &c.
3 Printers,	

Mr. Gray says, that "he is intimately acquainted with these families, visits them frequently, and knows them to be the proper subjects of this ministry." They are not able to pay the taxes which would entitle them to worship, with their families, at our other churches, and many of them receive assistance from charitable societies every winter.

The Sunday School is held twice every Sabbath, during the hour preceding the religious services in the church. Before its removal to Pitts street, it had an average attendance of about 140 pupils; it now numbers 310 pupils, and 42 teachers, and has an attendance averaging from 230 to 240 children. The school is opened and closed with prayer, to which the children respond. The children, for the most part, exhibit marks of great neglect in their moral education; many of them are rude and lawless in their behaviour, some vicious and indifferent; others deeply interested in the various services, and not a few apparently as good and intelligent as any children of their age. About a fourth part of the pupils are orphans. The task of teaching such children is peculiarly arduous, but the fact that their attendance is tolerably regular, and that their whole number increases with every year, is suf-

ficient evidence that it is faithfully performed. On Wednesday afternoons, there is a sewing school for about 300 poor girls who are instructed by 35 ladies. — Those will estimate the importance of this school, who know how many females in this city are kept in extreme poverty, because they are only able to take very coarse work, and have by their numbers and competition reduced the price of this to almost nothing.

An association of young mechanics also meet there for moral improvement, and a course of simple lectures on natural history. An evening reading and writing school will be formed for indigent boys engaged through the day in shops and trades. These things, however, receive from Mr. Gray, only his good wishes and occasional advice.

We regret that we have been obliged to surrender the services of Mr. Bartol, who was for several months so valuable an aid to Mr. Gray in his arduous labors. Mr. Gray's present state of health gives us hopes that he will be able to continue these labors with only occasional assistance.

The importance of family visits by the Ministers at Large, we hope, is already well understood.

Mr. Gray states that he has under his care, about 75 families, which he does not consider as connected with his church, but which he visits frequently. He has held evening meetings at the houses of such, as were unable to attend church, which he has always found pleasant to the individuals concerned ; and he has embraced every opportunity, which offered, of preaching the gospel, and of giving encouragement and advice. During the last quarter, he has been called, at various times, to visit the Massachusetts Hospital, the Jail, the Houses of Correc-

tion and Reformation, and the Farm School, and has always been kindly received.

The ministry at the south part of the city continues to be carried on with the same zeal and interest as heretofore. Mr. Barnard has described his plans and services with much minuteness in his "First Annual Report to the Proprietors and Friends of the Warren Street Chapel," which has been extensively circulated, and renders an account of them in this place unnecessary. The only religious services in his chapel, at present, on the Sabbath, are two day services for children;—the usual evening service for adults having been abandoned for some time past.

Mr. Barnard has been more and more impressed with the importance of his labors for *children*; he feels that he has been commissioned by Providence to go and preach to them, and has, therefore, been devoting his time and thoughts for some time past, chiefly to them. The Board are of opinion that this, though an interesting work, constitutes a part only of the general design for which this Fraternity was organized. But Mr. Barnard, feeling it to be the *great object* to which he should devote himself, and being desirous to pursue it without restraint or dictation from any one, has sent in his resignation of the office of Minister at Large. The Board cannot but express their regret that his views are such as to have led him to adopt this course. They believe that his retirement from the service will be felt as a loss; but at the same time they are of opinion, that his education and natural endowments peculiarly fit him for the sphere of duty, in which he desires to move, and they therefore,

under all the circumstances of the case, consider themselves bound to abide by the decision, which he has himself made. They regard his plans for children as an experiment worthy of being faithfully tried ;—and whilst their own views of the objects of the Fraternity do not permit them to dispense with services for adults, they would nevertheless assure him of their wishes for his success.

The question is, not whether preaching shall be addressed to children—not whether it shall be addressed to them in separate congregations, but whether adults shall be *directly* addressed at all. For it is manifest that, if only one minister is employed by us in any place, he should not so limit his instructions as to exclude adults from public worship suited to their mature years.

Again, it is plainly impossible to fulfil this trust without having the power to prescribe the duties of the ministers employed by us. We ought not to have the responsibility without the control. Even a constrained submission to our requirements will do little to effect our objects. Whilst therefore, we do justice to the intentions, and wish well to the efforts and estimate the characters of those who think another mode of doing good better than our own, we should do wrong to insist upon retaining them in our ministry, however desirable it might otherwise be.

The Board will supply the place which has been left vacant by Mr. Barnard's retirement, as soon as a suitable person can be found.

The health of the Rev. Dr. Tuckerman has been such, during the past year, as to render him unable to perform

much service as a Minister at Large. He left the city in the autumn for a warmer climate, and the committee indulge the hope, that upon his return, he will find himself sufficiently restored, to be able to resume some portion at least, of his useful labors.

We beg leave to mention two or three cases, among many, that might be enumerated, to show the kind of influence which this ministry exerts.

Whilst on a visit to an applicant for charity two months since, we were informed that there was a family below in great distress from sickness. In consequence, we descended to a small room, where we found a little child lying in a cradle. It was laboring under the most hideous form of disease;—every respiration could be heard at the most distant part of the room; its face was swelled and covered with sores. We inquired of a man, who seemed to be its only attendant, whether the child was under the care of any physician. He answered “no—I do not approve of a physician.” Whilst we were wondering at the stupidity, or hard-heartedness of the person thus addressed, the mother came in with a few sticks in her hand; she went up to the child, and caressed it in tones, which denoted both her anxiety and her love. We made the same inquiry of her. She looked at her husband, and then, in a hasty manner, said something about having employed a physician, and having afterwards dismissed him.—We urged upon them the immediate necessity of obtaining medical advice as the only chance of saving the child’s life, and offered to send a physician to them. They seized upon the offer with great eagerness, the tears starting to their eyes, as they thanked us: and he was accordingly sent.

We subsequently inquired into the case, and found the facts to be these. This was a young couple with one child;—the husband an honest day laborer, without much energy of character, but industrious, sober and able bodied. Their single apartment was well furnished, and its little arrangements denoted some comfort and great neatness. During the summer the husband earned \$1,25 per day. He had laid up \$17 for his family, and there was a sum of \$20 still owing to him by his employer, who had failed. Being merely what is called a tender to a mason, he found himself, on the approach of winter, out of employment. His child had suffered from a protracted sickness; his wife was within a few weeks of her confinement; he had paid his last shilling to the doctor, and then dismissed him through fear of running in debt; and this was the mystery of his having no physician when we called. Such were the facts in the case. Now let any one consider the awful temptations to which this man was exposed, under the pressure of these circumstances. If he had stolen a little wood, or a few necessities for his family, or if he had gone in despair to drown his cares at the dram shop, would it have been extraordinary? He had been in a comfortable condition, he was now destitute and wretched. What was it he needed most? Evidently most of all a kind friend to encourage and sustain him, to preserve him from doing wrong, to direct him in doing right;—and such was found for him. Not more than \$3 were expended upon his case, and yet through this trifling donation and a little sympathy and advice, he and his wife were raised from the very depths of despair, enabled to support the loss of their child; put into a way of getting along alone, and left with a deep sentiment of gratitude in their hearts.

One of the most constant attendants upon the Chapel is a common laborer, formerly grossly intemperate, profane and idle. His family suffered greatly from the effects of these vices, and from the want of a comfortable support. After withdrawing himself from public worship for nine years, one of the Ministers at Large, was called upon, as a matter of form, to attend the funeral of his child. The occasion, the prayer, and address aroused within him the feelings of a man and a father, and he awakened to the realities of his own situation, and the sufferings of his family. By the minister's judicious improvement of this opportunity, he was restored to his wife, his children, and his home, a "sadder and a better man," to better prospects in this world, and we trust, to better hopes of another; and peace and happiness returned to a whole family, to whom they had long been strangers.

About five months since, the Minister at Large was called to visit a family in affliction. The husband was a follower of Mr. Kneeland, an attendant upon his lectures, and an active disseminator of his views. He was pleased however, with the attention paid to his family, and invited the minister to his house. The opportunity was gladly embraced. By frequent conversation, by the loan of tracts, and other means, his mind was so far influenced that he abandoned his infidel notions and became a constant attendant on religious worship.

A young woman abandoned her home and fled to the house of an acquaintance, where she was greatly exposed to temptation. One of the Ministers at Large having heard of it immediately went to see her. He reasoned with her, pointed out to her the dangers of the step she

had taken, and finally brought her back safe and repentant to the bosom of her own family. An indiscretion, occasioned by some domestic dissension was thus prevented from terminating in the ruin of the party concerned, by the prompt and friendly admonitions of this ministry.

A short time since the Minister at Large was sent for by a woman who, in early youth had experienced deep religious impressions; but through the bad influence of associates, had, for ten years past, led a life of dangerous frivolities and dissipation. When her husband heard of her intention to go to church, he asked her with a sneer, if "she had been caught by that Chapel. "This religion," said he, "is all stuff; when we lie down in the grave, there is an end of us."—And yet this woman, by her gentle and judicious deportment, assisted by the friendly advice of the minister, has induced her husband to accompany her to the Chapel, and to profess deep sorrow for his former course of conduct.

Another individual, notorious for wickedness of all kinds, was suddenly taken sick. In his dying hour, he sent for the Minister at Large, and committed his child to his care, with the request "that he would counsel and instruct him," thus acknowledging the power of those principles, which it had been the object of his whole life to deride.

Among the applicants for seats at the opening of the new Chapel, was a woman, who stated "that her husband never went to church."—A few weeks since, she came to the minister, and requested seats for him and his two brothers. The aged mother of these sons remarked, "never did I expect to see my sons interested in going to church." It is believed that this result was effected

chiefly through the influence of the children of the family, who were pupils of the Sunday School.

Such are a few of the cases which show the nature, though not the amount of the healing influences of this ministry among the poor and neglected.

From the yearly account of the Treasurer, it appears that the amount collected from the associated churches since the first of April last, is \$2,185,34—a sum considerably less than the subscription of the previous year, and evidently insufficient to carry on the objects of this Fraternity in a manner at all commensurate with their magnitude and importance.

This Parent Institution ought to be conducted with such spirit as to animate by its example its offspring in London, Liverpool, New York, and other places. But the fact has been that one congregaion in New York have raised \$4000, while all our associated congregations, in this city have, during the last year, raised little more than half that sum, and our contributions, instead of increasing, have diminished.

While the Ministry at Large was tried, as a partial experiment, these small sums were sufficient, but more than double the amount will be necessary to extend it through the city. Then it was prudent to make the trial on a small scale, but now it is true economy to carry our well tried plans into full and vigorous execution, and to make them by a wise liberality effect all their good purposes and return to us the abundant fruits of our labors. We know that it is not possible that all our congregations, never so large and flourishing, will suffer this ministry to languish and grow feeble from stinted and penurious supplies. And we shall act upon this belief.

It will be perceived that the Fraternity have now in their employment, a Minister at Large, at the westerly part of the city only. We do not intend, under existing circumstances, to ask assistance for the erection of any other building, but we do intend, by the aid of the churches and of benevolent individuals, to extend the Ministry at Large to other parts of the city.

In proposing this plan, we think it unnecessary to bring forward a single new fact, or argument. The question of the benefits of this ministry no longer stands in need of reasoning or evidence. The experiment has been tried for years. The results are universally known. Experience, the test of all things, has fully tested this. No one denies, no one doubts, and it is a work of supererogation to attempt to prove that what is a blessing in one part of the city, will be a blessing in another. We propose to procure three other suitable places of worship in the northern, southern and eastern parts of the city ; to employ a Minister at Large and to establish a Sunday School in each, except at the south end, where the Rev. Mr. Barnard's establishment for children will render the latter unnecessary. An effort will be needed to do this. We intend to make this effort and to rely upon the blessing of God, and the aid of churches and individuals for the means of success.

In behalf of the Central Board.

HENRY B. ROGERS, *Secretary.*

APRIL 2, 1837.

NOTE.

It may be objected that the times will not be favorable to these efforts. But, if it be true that times of financial difficulty are at hand, the poor will then be thrown out of employment, or compelled to change their occupations. Their wants and discouragements will not only make them dependant on others for support, but may produce habits which will render them a burden and expense to the community. It is a measure therefore of pure economy, by a little sympathy and encouragement—a few words of advice as to what they shall do for a support, and the aid of a very small sum, (perhaps three dollars, as in the case above stated,)—to enable them to help themselves, in such times, and keep them from those vices which idleness and discontent are so apt to engender.

James Haywood Esq
with the Prospects
THE
of Saml & Greene.

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CENTRAL BOARD

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS, SCHOOL STREET.

1838.

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REPORT.

IN the last Annual Report, the Board expressed an intention of extending the Ministry at Large considerably beyond its then existing limits. Such an extension was demanded, as they conceived, by the moral and religious condition of large numbers of individuals in those sections of the city, which had not yet been visited ; and for the successful execution of their project, they relied with great confidence, upon the growing interest of the community in this Association, and the liberality of its acknowledged friends. In consequence of the extraordinary pecuniary distress, which has prevailed in the city during the whole of the past year, the Board have not been able to carry out their plans so fully as they could have desired. They have, however, the pleasure to state, that some progress has been made in the objects which they had in view. Since the last anniversary two additional Ministers at Large have been elected — the Rev. Jno. T. Sargent and Robert C. Waterston ; and these gentlemen have been

sedulously engaged for the greater part of the year in the duties attached to their office, the former in the southern and the latter in the northern section of the city.

Mr. Sargent obtained from the city the use of a small building in Northampton Street, which he has occupied as a Chapel and Sunday School since July last. Mr. Waterston occupies a room under the Seaman's Bethel in the North Square. On account of his connection as a student with the Theological School at Cambridge, his labors in this ministry are, for the present, chiefly confined to the Sabbath day.

Mr. Sargent having expressed a wish to be ordained, in order that he might administer the ordinances of the Christian religion to those who could rightfully partake of them, and a compliance with his wishes appearing to the Board in every way expedient and desirable, the usual preparations for the occasion were made, and he was regularly inducted into the office of an evangelist on the last Sunday evening of October, in the Federal Street Church. The performances proved to be unusually impressive; and, without doubt, contributed to encourage the hopes and strengthen the faith of many of those who were witnesses of the solemn ceremony, as well as of him who was inducted by it into all the privileges of the sacred office.

From the Annual Report of the treasurer, it appears that the amount collected from the various churches since the first of April last, and which belongs to the present year, is \$2,635.27; an amount which we are happy to say exceeds that of the last year, and which, considering the state of the times, we regard as a most convincing proof of an increasing interest in the community in

behalf of the cause. For this favorable result we are much indebted to the liberal subscriptions taken in the First and West churches.

Nothing of further importance having occurred in the Central Board during the year, we beg leave to present to the Fraternity the following extracts from the Reports of the Ministers at Large to the Executive Committee, which will furnish them with a full account of their various services, and the success which has attended them.

MR. GRAY'S REPORT.

Chapel Services.—It is now sixteen months since the Chapel in Pitts Street was dedicated. Three services have been holden every Sabbath, excepting during the summer months. The house, for the last ten months, has been so crowded, especially in the afternoon and evening, as to render it necessary to fill the aisles with seats. At first, some precautions were necessary to secure good order and decorum, but latterly I have been extremely gratified by the perfect silence, profound attention, and deep interest which have prevailed. Many, who a year since discouraged the minister's heart, now present the most encouraging examples of a christian life. Some parents, who had not been in a church for years, are now constant in their attendance. Young men, too, who were at first thoughtless and indifferent, are now serious in their deportment and apparently interested. I have been frequently requested to visit persons who have attended at my chapel only occasionally, but who on being

taken sick or meeting with trouble have deemed my services desirable. My conversations, when at their houses, have been very full and free, and I trust, my visits to them have not been without profit.

It appears from my records that 57 persons have been admitted to the church during the year and 53 baptised;—of whom 17 were adults and 36 children. 42 of those who were connected with the Chapel have died, and I have attended the funerals of three not connected with it. I have invited and received assistance in preaching, during the year, from clergymen of the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Episcopalian denominations.

Soon after the Chapel was erected, I became desirous of meeting and addressing those of my flock who were most interested, in a free and plain manner, on religious subjects, and also of affording them an opportunity of becoming acquainted with each other. For this purpose I appointed church meetings to be holden once a fortnight, which have been continued with great interest till the present time, and have done much good. They are opened and closed with prayer, and accompanied with an exposition of some portion of scripture. After the meeting, an opportunity is afforded for social and friendly conversation. These meetings have been so well attended that recently I have caused them to take place once a week; and we have removed from the library to a much larger room. Twenty-six meetings have been holden the last year.

I have also held meetings at the dwellings of the sick, at which the neighbors and friends came in, and thus those, who were deprived of attending public worship, were enabled to engage in religious services which have

proved to be gratifying and I trust profitable. It is a matter of regret to me that my engagements have prevented me from holding as many of these meetings as I could have desired. I can truly say that they have been highly interesting to me.

Visiting.—This important part of my labors I have been permitted to discharge without much interruption during the year, for which I feel truly grateful. It is a duty which cannot be neglected without great detriment to the cause; for in order that those who come under this ministry may become interested, they must be personally acquainted with their pastor. They must regard him as their friend, and for this purpose, he must visit them frequently. It is a mistaken idea which some entertain, that the minister will relax his efforts in this particular if he has a chapel, or that, in such a case, he will incline to confine his visits to his flock only. My experience convinces me that this is not the fact, and that the only boundary he will set will be that of the section of the city to which he intends and is understood to confine his labors.

Hardly a day passes in which calls are not made upon me to visit families out of my flock, and such too as cannot be neglected. My visits this year have much exceeded in number those of any former one, being 3400, or on an average, twelve a day. I have never been called to visit the sick so frequently or in such large numbers as during the last six months. At one time I had 34 persons on my list;—indeed, recently, so many have been under my charge that my strength has hardly allowed of my visiting any others. I have also visited weekly and sometimes oftener, some of the patients at the Massachusetts

General Hospital, and it has been particularly gratifying to me to hear from them frequent expressions of gratitude for the kindness and attention they have received whilst at that excellent institution. In consequence of my increasing duties, I have withdrawn altogether from several Benevolent societies with which I have heretofore been actively connected, feeling that my connection with them was injuring me in my own work, and requiring time and strength which could be otherwise employed to far greater advantage. The past year has been much pleasanter to me on this account, as my visits and duties have been principally confined to my peculiar calling.

Children.—I will now state what my labors have been in promoting the spiritual welfare of children. Once every month I have preached a sermon in the morning expressly adapted to them, and have found, that both they and their parents have been much interested in the service. During the summer, I delivered on Saturday afternoons, ten lectures to the children on some subject connected with Natural History. Quite a large number attended, and we passed a happy hour together, reminding me of the many pleasant hours that were passed with the children by my predecessor some ten years since. At the close of the year I had the pleasure of meeting 240 children, connected with the Chapel, at my house. The interview was truly delightful, and will long be remembered both by them and myself. Thus by preaching to children; by addressing them at the Sunday and Sewing schools; by lecturing to them on Saturday and Wednesday afternoons; by meeting with them at my house and at their dwellings; an interest in spiritual things is awakened and kept alive in their minds, and I

trust much good is done. In addition to my own efforts in behalf of the young, there are important services rendered by others, which require my notice.

Howard Sunday School.—The school has two sessions on each Sabbath of one hour's duration. In the afternoon, a general lesson is given by the superintendent, or some one whom he selects or invites, which is in fact a sermon for children, brought down to their comprehension; and the christian truth which it aims to impart, is revealed to them so simply and by such familiar illustrations, as to enable them to understand and profit by it as readily as can their parents in the church. There are at present 362 children and 48 teachers connected with the school. The general attention and harmony which prevail among the pupils, their regular attendance and good behavior, and especially, the interest with which they speak of their teachers in my visits to their families, are to my mind convincing proof that much good is effected by this beneficent institution. Indeed, I know not what would become of many of the children were it not for the valuable services rendered to them by their kind and devoted teachers. Cases might be related to show that very remarkable changes in the character and habits of some of the children have been produced by the Sunday School. In one or two instances they have displayed great maturity in understanding and imbibing christian truths and principles; and, in not a few, their interest in religious matters has been the principal cause of bringing their parents to church. In this connection I cannot but notice the good effects which result to my ministry from its connection with the teachers of the school. By their regulations, they are required to visit the families of the

respective children as often as once a month. In this way they become acquainted with the situation and characters of the parents; who frequently regard them as their personal friends, and yield to them a deference which gives them great influence over their minds. They thus, in a certain sense, become so many ministers at large, encouraging the principal in his labors, and adding their own weight of character to the influence which he exerts. In addition to this, these teachers, belonging as they do to different circles of society, and actively engaging in various kinds of business, serve to diffuse the views and purposes of the minister through the various circles in which they move,—and to bring back to him the opinions and sentiments which they hear expressed by others. Thus they become exceedingly useful in accomplishing the great purpose, of bringing the different classes of society into closer union with the poor, and of keeping alive an interest in their welfare.

Sewing School. In 1836 a school was formed by Dr. Tuckerman for the purpose of instructing little girls in sewing. It has been continued to the present time with unabated interest—there are now about 180 girls, taught by 38 ladies. The importance of the school is manifest, from the fact that little or no instruction of the kind is given at their day schools, and many of the parents have not the time or ability to afford it to them at home.—The children like the school so well as to be willing to forego their accustomed play on Wednesday afternoon for the sake of it; and it is certainly a most pleasant sight to see so many little creatures gathered in groups around their respective teachers, all closely plying their needles, and all at the same time joining in some simple song

expressive of gratitude to God for his goodness to them. These ladies again are closely connected with the families to which the children belong; they visit them often, attend upon them when sick, assist them when in distress, and impart to them wholesome advice.

Franklin Association. The young men connected with the Chapel have formed themselves into a Society, under this name; their object is "mutual improvement in knowledge and virtue." Meetings have been held every Wednesday evening since September last, and have served a very valuable purpose.

Measures have recently been adopted to form a library for the use of the members in connection with the families which worship at the Chapel, and it is quite desirable that the effort should succeed. There have been, during the year, constant applications from my people for the loan of books of a religious character, and I know of no place where a library would do more good. Should any one have any books at his disposal, he may be assured, that by devoting them to this object, he will confer a favor which will long be remembered. I take the occasion to express my thanks to the benevolent individual who placed at my disposal a number of the Rev. Mr. Brooks's Prayer Books; a more acceptable gift I could not have received; one hundred and fifty copies have been distributed among the worshippers at the Chapel. If I had the means, I think good might be done, by publishing occasionally a few suitable tracts;—a very slight attempt has already been made in this respect by publishing a portion of some of my sermons in a pamphlet form. I have also distributed a few copies of Ware on the

Christian Character, and I could distribute 100 copies more to great advantage.

There are at present 132 families connected with the Chapel, consisting of 352 adults and 267 children; there are also about 100 families which I visit, that are not connected with the Chapel. That these families, with few exceptions, are those for whom the Chapel is designed, will appear from inspecting the records, on which their names and occupation are entered.

If the Chapel should, at any time, be the means of drawing persons away from other places of worship, the result will be contrary to my wishes. That it may have had this effect in some few cases, I do not doubt; but, under the present regulations, such cases are not likely to occur again. In every application for the admission of persons who belong elsewhere, I am careful to explain fully the design of the building, and to be plain and unequivocal in my refusal. If, however, at any time, any pastor, parent, or guardian, shall perceive that the Chapel is the means of taking any one from a Church to which he belongs, he will confer a favor by informing me of the fact, and he may rest assured that he will find me ready and willing to co-operate with him in checking the evil.

Mr. Gray, in his Report, details many very interesting cases that have come under his notice, which show most conclusively the happy and valuable effects of this Ministry, and which it would be pleasant to record here; but our limits are too prescribed to admit of them.

MR. SARGENT'S REPORT.

The Ministry at Large being but recently represented in the extreme South section of the city, and its agency there dating, as it does, within a year, can of course exhibit few results of interest in an Annual Report. Its operations are based upon essentially the same general plan as the older branch, and with a prospect of similar success. My connection with the ministry commenced in June last, and thus far my success fully justifies the selection of the location which has been assigned to me. The principal difficulty I have encountered is the want of a suitable place of public worship. The room I now occupy is small and unfavorably situated, but it has served as a nucleus for religious influence, and the gathering of a respectable congregation. I can present, as yet, no very interesting results or statistics; but have however seen enough to convince me of the urgent need of such a ministry in this quarter, and, by the blessing of God, have realized somewhat of its good effects. My visits are gratefully received, and have ranged within very nearly 300 families. Our place of worship is well frequented three times a day on the Sabbath, by an interesting and attentive audience. Our Sabbath School includes at present 130 children, with an average attendance of 70 or 80. I am confident the number, both of children and adults, would be more than doubled, were our place of assembling more convenient, central, and accessible. The main instruments of parochial effect in this ministry are of course daily visiting and preaching, to which objects I have chiefly given my attention, while, at the same time, due regard has been had to the various other

secular appliances which tend, in no small degree, to ameliorate the moral and temporal condition of the poor. These means have been elsewhere detailed among the riper effects of this ministry. On the whole, the prospects of the cause, in its new department, are highly encouraging, notwithstanding many unfavorable circumstances, to which, in former reports, I have alluded; such as the want of Sabbath School teachers, and a more commodious and better situated place for holding our assemblies. The present room is found to be too near to the town of Roxbury, in consequence of which many are induced to resort to it from thence, and too remote from the centre of the population which it was intended to serve; but as yet, we have been unable to procure any better location. Our distance from the centre of the City prevents us also from receiving that sympathy and assistance from our friends, which we should otherwise enjoy.

The necessity indeed of another place of worship became obvious at an early stage of our proceedings in this quarter, and has not been overlooked or forgotten by your Central Board; as will appear from a vote which that body recently passed — “that the Executive Committee take such measures as may be deemed expedient, for the erection of a new Chapel in the Southern Section.” The Committee, preliminary to any action of their own, partially referred the matter to me, with a view that I might ascertain how far such a project was practicable, and how much either of funds or encouragement, I might obtain. In the execution of this commission, I felt myself embarrassed, at the very outset, by the great depression of business affairs among us. So vain, indeed, under

existing circumstances, appeared the prospect of soliciting funds, that I took no measures of any consequence to that effect, but concluded that for the present it was inexpedient to prosecute the inquiry submitted. I would respectfully suggest, however, the importance of furthering this purpose at the earliest available opportunity. Serious and sufficient as may be the present obstacle, it deserves to be considered, (for to my mind it is a matter of solemn interest) that the very embarrassments which thus preclude the execution of our design, are also fast increasing the class of persons for whom such a Chapel is needed. It is also observable, that the class referred to is apt to accumulate at certain points in a city, by the force of sympathy and other causes; and in no one point is this accumulation more remarkable than at the extreme south, where the almost daily rise of lowly tenements indicates the fast growing population. A population so formed must be somewhat heterogeneous in its character, and so I find it with regard to the community of persons under my observation. Their circumstances are as various as their needs are urgent. There are among them minds, creeds, and characters of all descriptions. A large class never knew the privilege of meeting in the house of God. Some are kept away by apathy respecting religious matters;—some by sceptical or infidel notions;—but by far the greater part, I believe, by the want of any place of worship of sufficiently convenient access. There are too the lone ones, the aged, the infirm, the sick, who have known the privilege of going up with the worshipping assembly to the house of God, but whose only temple now is by their own cottage fire-side. I might further analyse the sphere of my labors,

but I forbear; and will only offer the fervent prayer, that God will "establish the work of our hands," and grant more and more success to our efforts.

MR. WATERSTON'S REPORT.

During the last few months, I have lost none of my faith in the great importance of the ministry for the poor. Indeed, my faith increases with my experience. When I have gone among the poor and seen their wants; when I have beheld the indifference of some, and the gratitude of others; when I have known of the neglected, the sick, the dying, the greatness of the work has come more and more home to me. If the question is asked, "what has been done?" the answer may be indefinite, while at the same time very much may have been done. It may be difficult to lay the hand on this or that, while we may be entirely satisfied that a great influence has gone forth. Now and then there will indeed come up a startling fact, but this cannot be common. I have continued my labors at the North part of the city, every Sunday, holding two religious services in addition to the Sunday School. In the school the average attendance has been about 140. Many of the older scholars seem deeply interested, and I believe, look forward with pleasure to the time when they may be able to be teachers themselves. Many of the parents seem moved with a right spirit; some of them have told me that their happiest moments were those they spent with us on the Sabbath day. Still, we are much cramped in our doings by so small and in-

convenient a room. We cannot effect much where we are. The room is generally full, sometimes crowded ; but it is low and confined. We look forward with hope to the time when the community, through the Fraternity of Churches, will erect a Chapel at the North part of the city like that in Pitts Street. I am satisfied that such a Chapel would be the means of great good, and that until we have such a one, our labors in this part of the city must of necessity be less extended. Still, on this point we are willing for a season to be silent, and let patience have her perfect work.

I will state one or two facts which recur to my mind, and may serve to show the need and bearing of our efforts.

An interesting girl in our school, about thirteen years of age, remaining at home, one Sunday, some time since, her teacher, after the service, went to see her. She found the girl reading a novel, while on the floor, before her, lay stretched out, a man in a state of beastly intoxication. Shortly after, the father came into the room ; he appeared glad to see the teacher and talked with interest of his daughter. He said he knew it was a bad thing for her to hear the language and see the scenes that she was obliged to ; that, when there was gross talk, he locked her up stairs ; and, with a most profane oath, he swore " he felt so much for her good, being his only daughter, that he made her say her prayers every night." Such was the home of a girl who, for sweetness of expression and amiableness of character, might be the pride of any family in our city. Under these influences she was budding into womanhood. I will add that from that time, she had been every Sunday to the school and services, and that

last week I saw a book in which she had recorded her recollections of the sermons she had heard, and the fullness and correctness of the record would be creditable to any girl of her age. I have faith in her sincerity, and hope to see her a useful and pious woman.

A few Sundays ago, noticing one of the boys to be poorly clad, I went home with him. He led me up a dark stairway into a cold and cheerless room. It was in the afternoon, but the father and mother were in bed. There were two families consisting of six persons who lived in this room. They had no fuel but a few chips which the children had picked up. When I entered, they hastily gathered up and hid a pack of cards; but denied having used them. The boy, a bright looking lad, has been with us every Sunday for three months, and, I trust, the influence of Sunday has counteracted in some measure the influence of the week. I might fill up whole sheets of paper in stating facts like these, various in their character, and all bringing home the importance of our work; but it is needless. The teachers of the school have made more than 300 visits within the last three months, and herein I consider many happy fruits of this ministry are visible.

DR. TUCKERMAN'S REPORT.

I have been kept within the house so large a part of the past winter, and have had so little strength when I could go abroad, that my official service has been very small. I have visited but few families, and have therefore no Report to render of my ministry. My intercourse,

however, has been so frequent and intimate with my colleagues, and I have been kept so constantly informed of their objects and services, that I cannot but hope I have been in some measure useful to them through the sympathy which unites us, as they have been most eminently to me by their furtherance of the work to which my heart and life are devoted. I desire most devoutly to acknowledge the adorable providence, under which three young men have entered, and by which, as I believe, they have been guided and sustained in their ministry.

Few as have been my opportunities for any direct co-operation, I can yet add my testimony to that of Mr. Gray, in respect to the results of his ministry. There is indeed no moral enterprise, the beneficial results of which can be more certain than those of this service, if it shall be carried out by competent instruments, and in the spirit of the Gospel. The Chapel in Pitts Street has fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of its warmest friends. The congregation which is gathered there is a spectacle to inspire the delight of every generous mind. It is a striking manifestation, and a very affecting and grateful one, of one of the forms of redemption proposed by our religion. I earnestly wish that both the friends of this ministry, and those, if such there be, who are sceptical in respect to the demand for it, would go there, on any Sunday, and see, and learn, and judge for themselves. And when they shall have seen this congregation of worshippers and have learned how it has been gathered, and the efforts that its minister is making that christian knowledge and every sanctifying influence may be extended, as far as possible, to the greatest number, and to those also, to whom, if the gospel is to be preached, it must be in their homes, because they have not the attire in which

they can go to church ; then let judgment be passed upon the character of this work, and upon the support which may be fairly asked for it from our churches.

Mr. Sargent will, I know, speak reluctantly, and even reservedly, of the difficulties with which he has had to contend through the past winter, and of the obstacles to his success. I must therefore beg leave to say a word of them. He has, I believe, been an instrument of very important good. He has proved himself well qualified for his work, and deserving of all confidence and encouragement in it. The field of labor to which he has been appointed, is also a very important one, and cannot be overlooked, or given up, but at a great loss to our community. But the impracticability of obtaining any other place in which to gather a congregation except a Primary school room, and that, not a quarter large enough for the purpose, and situated very near the line which separates us from Roxbury, and therefore resorted to alike by parents and their children from Roxbury, — has been a cause of constant embarrassment, which might have disheartened any one whose whole soul was not in the service. Mr. Sargent has comprehended in his visits nearly 300 families, among whom, as far as he has had the means, he has very faithfully acted as a christian minister. If a well situated Chapel could have been provided for him in the last autumn, I have no doubt that he would now have had a large assemblage in it every Sunday ; and till such a Chapel shall be provided, he cannot give full proof of his ministry. There is not an agency by which the well being of our city may be more effectually advanced, than by this ministry, if it shall be furnished with the means of carrying out its purposes ; and one of the most important of its means is its Chapels. I hope, therefore, that

measures will soon be taken to obtain a Chapel for Mr. Sargent, for which, I am quite sure, with God's blessing, a tenfold remuneration will be received in its sanctifying and saving influences.

I think it proper to inform the Board, that while I have been able to do but little abroad, I have availed myself of the leisure of the past winter, for the preparation of a fuller exposition than I have previously been able to give of the "Claims of Cities for a Ministry at Large." I have now nearly completed a work upon this subject, in which I have spoken with some freedom upon topics of which I have said but little, or at which I could not even glance, in my Reports. This work will probably be published in the coming summer, and I cannot but hope that it will be useful to the cause, it is intended to serve, not only here, but in other cities.

From the above Reports it appears, that this ministry branches out into a very considerable variety of forms; that it brings to its aid individuals belonging to different circles of society; that it is brought to bear upon quite a large number of the poor and neglected; and that its operations, from their general character and the facility of their application, are peculiarly fitted to act upon the mind with power and effect. The influence attempted is wholly moral, and it is moral influence exerted naturally and directly, and therefore effectually.

We have examined the ministry carefully, and believe it to be the true plan for elevating the less favored classes of society. We invite others to examine it also, and we believe they will come to the same conclusion.

But it may be said,—taking it for granted that all these things are true,—what then? We answer much every way. For if it be true that this ministry is an unobjectionable and efficient instrument for improving the moral state of society in its obscure walks, then there is a strong and not to be resisted claim upon all the more favored classes of the community, to sustain and carry it out far beyond its present limits. The object is a noble one; and the number of those who ought to receive its benefits is tenfold greater, than the number which has yet been brought within its reach. Consider for a moment how small is the seed which has yet been sown and how few are the laborers in the field. There are at this time but two individuals who devote their whole time and talents to the work,—Mr. Gray and Mr. Sargent.

Dr. Tuckerman is precluded from almost all active service by the state of his health; and Mr. Waterston, in consequence of his engagements at Cambridge, can give to it only Sunday and a part of Saturday and Monday.

There is but one Chapel with anything like the necessary accommodations; the others are merely single rooms, temporarily loaned for the purpose; but inconvenient, badly located, and altogether too small for any considerable audience. The amount of funds, also, received by the Treasurer is wholly inadequate to pay a moderate salary to the present ministers, and provide for the necessary contingent expenses; much less to procure further assistants, or erect more Chapels. And, yet, under all these disadvantages, and with these slender resources, much good has been done; how much more, then, have we a right to assume, might have been effected, if our means had been at all equal to the claims upon

us. The appeal cannot long be resisted. This ministry has now been faithfully tried ; it has approved itself to the reason and consciences of men ; hundreds are waiting to receive its administrations, and we are persuaded, that ere long, a combined effort will be made for its wider and more permanent extension. In this city there ought to be at least four Chapels, equal in size and accommodation to that in Pitts Street ; and eight Ministers at Large in active service, two at each Chapel. When this shall be the case, we may reasonably expect to produce some permanent and extended result. — Vice may receive a check which will sensibly diminish the numbers in our Alms-houses and Penitentiaries ; truth and virtue may begin to prevail as it has never prevailed before.

To conclude : — we are no enthusiasts ; we do not expect to banish sin from the earth, or make all men love virtue, but we do believe, that, if this ministry were fully and properly carried out, so as to embrace and come in contact with all the individuals of the classes for which it was designed, it would tend more than any thing else which has yet been attempted, to improve their moral and temporal condition, and bring about that sympathy and good feeling, that spirit of order, and those habits of industry and sobriety, which are so essential to the well being and happiness of republican society. Let us then try it ; let us, as we have opportunity, contribute towards its support, liberally and cheerfully ; let us use our influence with others in its behalf. Let us, especially, ask of God his help and blessing.

In behalf of the Central Board,

HENRY B. ROGERS, *Sec'ry.*

Boston, April 1, 1838.

Abstract from the Treasurer's Report of Receipts and Expenditures for the Year ending April 1, 1838.

<i>Dr.</i>		<i>Cr.</i>
C. F. Barnard, one qr. salary	- 250,00	Hellis St. Branch - - 142,10
F. T. Gray, one year "	- 400,00	Federal St. " - - 425,00
J. T. Sargent, three qrs. salary -	- 300,00	Purchase St. " - - 108,00
R. C. Waterston, two " -	- 150,00	New North " - - 100,00
Expenses Pitts St. Chapel -	- 156,00	Twelfth Congregational do. - - 300,00
Expenses, fitting up Northampton St. Chapel, fuel, lights &c. -	- 315,36	Church Green do. - - 204,19
Interest on debt due on acc't. Pitts St. Chapel	450,00	Brattle St. do - - 200,00
J. T. Sargent, for extra expenses -	- 100,00	King's Chapel do. - - 300,00
Printing and advertising -	- 55,49	Second Church do. - - 175,00
Insurance Pitts St. Chapel -	- 42,64	West Church Society - - 283,23
Expenses for meetings of Society -	- 36,00	First Church " - - 292,75
F. T. Gray, extra expenses -	- 15,00	Donation from a member of Rev. Mr. Mott's Society - - 50,00
Disc't on money rec'd -	- 3,07	" " J. M. Fessenden, Esq. - - 20,00
Balance from this year's receipts	- 361,71	" through Rev. Dr. Channing - - 25,00
		" from a member of West Church by Rev. Mr. Gray - - 10,00
	<u>\$2635,27</u>	
		<u>\$2635,27</u>
		ELIJAH COBB, Treasurer.

THE
FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CENTRAL BOARD
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS, SCHOOL STREET.

1839.

REPORT.

THE Benevolent Fraternity of Churches is an association of several religious societies in this city, for the improvement of the moral state of the less favored portions of the community, by the support of a Ministry at Large and by other appropriate means.

In every populous city there is a large class of individuals who, from the circumstances of their birth and education, or the various events of life, are exposed to many peculiar trials and temptations, and shut out from a large portion of the most valuable privileges and influences enjoyed by other classes. This class consists of the poor, the vicious, the ignorant, the friendless and neglected; families that are crowded into narrow alleys and confined rooms; of parents who just make out to live from day to day by the sweat of their brow; of children who are born to poverty and moral exposure; of young men and women who are left without natural protectors, or become their own masters at the most dangerous period of their lives;

who live at service in families that neglect to watch over their moral conduct, or work in factories, or at various small trades.

It is a very large class, and naturally tends to increase with the growth of the city. The character and condition of the individuals who compose it demand our warmest sympathy — our deepest consideration. In their moral condition are involved their own happiness and welfare, and, to a certain extent, the happiness and welfare of the community in which they reside.

Now the object of this Society is to purify and elevate the characters of these, our brethren and fellow-citizens, through the influences of such moral and religious motives as reason and Christianity may suggest.

The first movements of the Ministry to the poor in this city may be traced as far back as the year 1822, when, under the patronage of an association of gentlemen for religious improvement, several laymen undertook to give evening lectures for their instruction in Hatters Square and other places. Their labors were useful, as a testimony to the poor of an awakening interest in their welfare, and as a means of obtaining more accurate information respecting their character and wants. They were continued at intervals through several successive years.

The permanent character, however, which the Ministry has since assumed is, undoubtedly, chiefly due to the Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, who, on leaving his parish in Chelsea, determined to devote himself to this work.

He was appointed in 1826 to the mission, which he has since so ably sustained, by the American Unitarian Association, and on the 5th of November in that year entered upon the duties of his office.

An upper room in a building in Merrimac Street was hired for his use, where he held a regular service each Sunday evening.

A Sunday School for poor children was also soon gathered in the same place, through the efforts of a few of the teachers of the Hancock Sunday School, who left that flourishing institution to engage in this unpromising undertaking. In addition to his labors in the lecture room, Dr. Tuckerman commenced a system of visiting from house to house among the poorer classes; and in the course of the first year had formed a personal acquaintance, more or less intimate, with 170 families. The success of these various efforts was at first so small as to have discouraged all but the most ardent minds. But a beginning in a good cause had been made. Much valuable information respecting the actual condition and characters of the less favored classes had been gained, and was communicated to the public in quarterly reports addressed to the Association. The consequence was that the interest in the subject, which had hitherto been confined to a few individuals, was now spread more widely through the community. In 1828, a small wooden chapel was erected by subscription in Friend Street; and on removal to it a larger congregation and school were soon collected. In 1833, Dr. Tuckerman was assisted in his labors by Messrs. Barnard and Gray. In 1834, the American Unitarian Association, conceiving that the time had arrived when it was expedient to place the Ministry at Large upon a more permanent footing, transferred its interests in it to the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, which was instituted for the purpose, and in whose charge it has since remained.

In 1835, a spacious building was erected in Warren Street, which Mr. Barnard occupied, under the auspices of this Fraternity, but becoming particularly interested in the condition of children, and intending to devote his attention chiefly to them, he dissolved his connection with us. During the succeeding year, a neat and equally commodious chapel was erected in Pitts Street, for Mr. Gray, who had taken the place of Dr. Tuckerman, whose ill health disabled him from continuing his usual labors. The religious services and Sunday School in Friend Street were removed to the new building, and a new and most remarkable impulse was given to the cause by the change.

The church and school room were almost immediately filled up, and have so continued to the present time, when solicitude is occasioned, not by the smallness of the numbers that attend, but by the inadequacy of the building to accommodate all those who desire to resort to it. New services were instituted, and a wider sphere of usefulness was opened. In 1837, Messrs. Waterston and Sargent were elected Ministers at Large. The field of Mr. Waterston's labors is in the Northern section of the city, and not having yet completed his preparatory studies, he at present devotes but a part of his time to the work. To Mr. Sargent is assigned the extreme Southern section of the city, where there is a large and rapidly increasing population of the less fortunate classes, to which he gives his undivided attention. During the past year a project has been entertained for building a Chapel in this section; and we are most happy to state that, notwithstanding many serious impediments which lie in its way, it is likely to be accomplished the present season.

The city authorities, in consequence of a vote of the

town, passed many years since, authorizing the selectmen to give a piece of their Neck lands to any religious society that should first undertake to erect a church thereon, have agreed to convey a lot of 8,000 feet to the Fraternity for this purpose. Subscriptions to the amount of \$8,246 have been obtained for a building. Contracts have been made for erecting a commodious two-story Chapel, on the plan of that in Pitts Street, and the work is already in progress. About \$5,754 are still required to meet the entire expenses of the new edifice ; but after the liberality and interest which has already been displayed in respect to the object, the Board will not suffer themselves to doubt that the full amount will be made up in the course of the present season.

The Ministry at Large has hitherto attempted to effect its objects chiefly in two ways. 1st. By friendly personal intercourse. 2d. By religious and other services in its Chapels.

Both of these methods have proved to be highly useful, but the first is undoubtedly the chief cause of the utility of the second. It would be difficult to describe the various cases in which good may be done to the poor and afflicted, by familiar personal intercourse with them ; for they are almost as numberless and diverse in their characteristics as are the vicissitudes of life. Any one, however, upon the slightest consideration, must be satisfied that a minister can in this way obtain an influence over the mind and character which nothing else will give him. He is enabled to place himself before those whom he visits in the light of a friend, rather than a censor or religious teacher. Now we know that, even among the most favored classes of society, the power of human sympathy

over the sorrowing or afflicted mind is great. How much greater then, must it be over the poor and neglected. Indeed, one of the chief sources of their wretchedness and degradation is the feeling that no one cares for them; that they are looked down upon by those who happen to be more favored in their outward condition; that they are set apart from the rest of the world; that there is an almost impassable gulf fixed between themselves and others. When, therefore, they find that a bridge is thrown across this gulf, and that individuals are actually passing over it, for the sake of holding communion with them, their hearts are stirred from the very bottom, and a most excellent opportunity is afforded for the introduction of such truths as shall serve to enlighten and awaken their moral powers. The ground is at once, in a great measure, prepared to receive the seed; and if it be good seed, and liberally sown, it will take root and produce fruit abundantly. By a constant system of visits from house to house, the Minister at Large soon becomes intimately acquainted with the character, prejudices, and dispositions of those he would influence, understands their real wants, and can address himself effectively to their ever varying sorrows and temptations. He can relieve their physical necessities—encourage their efforts to obtain employment, or inform them where they can find it—advise them in their various difficulties—put their children to service or school—invite them to his Chapel, and, as opportunity offers, introduce moral and religious truths, in such modes and degrees as may best influence their minds and conduct. His influence, however, is not confined to the families in which he visits; but by that mysterious law of moral relations, which keeps all the indi-

viduals of a class in juxta position with each other, it extends to those who are personally unknown to him. In addition to his usual parochial duties, the minister is often called upon to attend the funerals of persons with whom he has had no connection, and to visit jails, hospitals and penitentiaries; and on all such occasions good may be done. Mr. Gray has about 280 families, and Mr. Sargent 120, in which they visit daily. The former states the number of his visits for the past year at between 3 and 4,000. Both of them have stated, from time to time, in their reports, various cases in which they have produced decided changes in the character and conduct of individuals and families; and, if it were proper, they might be related here. Suffice it, however, to say, that the evidence of good results from this part of their labors, is striking and abundant.

The next method adopted by this Ministry, consists of religious services in the Chapels. Many fears were at first expressed with regard to this part of the plan; it was said that the poor could never be induced to attend church, excepting in the evening. But experience has proved the contrary, and our Chapels have already been productive of more good than even their warmest friends had anticipated. The services are, in form, similar to those usual in our Churches, but in style and spirit they are adapted to the peculiar characters and wants of the persons who attend upon them. They are held morning, afternoon and evening, excepting during the summer months, when the latter service is omitted. Each of them is fully attended. Indeed, the Pitts Street Chapel is crowded to overflowing; even the aisles are not unfrequently entirely filled up. The audience, from Sunday to Sunday, con-

sists mostly of the same individuals; and they are very constant in their attendance, and, to all appearance, deeply interested. There are at present 221 families, consisting of 493 adults and 321 children, in connection with the Pitts Street Church, and about 70 families, including 123 adults and 130 children, in regular attendance at the Southern Chapel.

It will probably be admitted by every one, that the good effects flowing from the services in these Chapels are at least equal to those which result from public worship elsewhere; but there are some obvious considerations which lead us to regard them as much greater. The very idea of the poor and neglected coming together for the public worship of God, in a building erected expressly for their use, is of itself fitted to operate favorably upon their character. A sentiment of self-respect, which lies at the foundation of every thing good in man, is at once generated in the breast. The poor man regards the Chapel as something which belongs to him, and when worshipping within its sacred precincts, he feels that the division walls which separate him from his fellow-creatures, are for a time overthrown, and that he stands on a level with the great multitude who go up to the house of God from all quarters of the earth. The minister, too, is his minister, specially sent to him; his best friend and benefactor. He is, therefore, particularly disposed to receive a strong impression from the truths which may be dispensed to him. For similar reasons, the rites of religion, as baptism and the Lord's supper, are doubly valued by the poor. The influence, also, of the different members of the congregation upon one another, is greater in these Chapels than in our Churches. They feel that they are, in many

respects, a peculiar people — closely allied to each other by circumstances; their sympathies are, therefore, readily awakened. There are now 131 communicants in the Pitts Street Church, and 23 in the Southern Chapel. They hold frequent meetings, which have proved to be highly useful in producing kind feelings, eliciting interchange of thought and sentiment, and encouraging conversation upon religious topics. The existence of such a body of individuals, closely united together within the congregation itself, is very serviceable to the pastor, in carrying out his plans among the class of which they form a part. His hands are strengthened by their sympathy and attention; he feels that in all emergencies he can depend upon their assistance.

But the Chapel brings advantages of an incidental character, quite as important as those which spring from public worship. A few of them we will briefly notice. And, first, there is connected with it a Sunday School. This has two sessions each Sabbath, and receives the children of the parents who attend the Chapel services, and a large number of others. It is needless to dwell upon the great utility of a Sunday School for children circumstanced as these are. The single fact, of bringing them together on the Lord's day, and keeping them for the time out of the reach of evil, is of itself an immense good.

There are in the Pitts Street School 50 teachers and 420 pupils, with an average attendance of from 275 to 300; at the Southern station there are 20 teachers and 130 pupils.

“The general attention and harmony which prevails among the pupils, their regular attendance and good behavior, and especially the interest with which they speak

of their teachers," says one of the Ministers, "is to my mind convincing proof that much good is effected by this beneficent Institution. Indeed, I know not what would become of many of the children, if it were not for the Sunday School."

The teachers are required to visit the families of the children once a month, and in this way they become acquainted with the parents, who frequently regard them as their best friends, and yield to them a deference which enables them to exert a wholesome influence over their minds. They thus, in a certain sense, become so many Ministers at Large, encouraging the Principal in his labors. The children frequently visit the Minister at his house, and he occasionally lectures and preaches to them in the Chapel.

Another appendage to the Chapel is the sewing circle. It embraces from 200 to 400 girls, who meet each Wednesday and Saturday afternoon to learn this useful art. Some of them belong to the Sunday School, and others do not; and the same is the case with their teachers. During the school, singing or reading by one of the ladies is always going on; and we know of no pleasanter sight than this school of children, all closely plying their needles, and all, at the same time, joining in some simple song, expressive of gratitude to God for his goodness to them. These ladies are also well acquainted with the families to which the children belong; they visit them often, attend upon them when sick, assist them in distress, and impart to them wholesome advice.

The only other accompaniment to the Chapel which we shall notice, is a Society of Young Men for Mutual Improvement. It consists chiefly of apprentices,

clerks, and young persons who attend worship in Pitts Street. They meet once a fortnight to hear a lecture, or discuss some moral subject. They intend also to establish a reading room, containing books and papers, to which they may resort daily. A similar Association has been formed by Mr. Sargent at the Southern Chapel, where lectures and discussions have been frequently held the past winter. Every one, who has any knowledge of the various temptations to which this class of young persons is exposed, especially in the evening, will be willing to admit that such an Association is a great good. It occupies their time and thoughts in an innocent pursuit; engages them on the side of virtue; affords them an opportunity for acquiring information and influence. It is another instrument of considerable utility in carrying on the work of this Ministry.

The Board have determined to commence a series of Tracts, adapted to the comprehension and moral condition of persons within the sphere of our Ministers' labors. They are to be published every other month, and we trust they will prove highly useful to those for whom they are intended. During the past year a communication was received from the Treasurer of the Domestic Mission Society in London, accompanied by two reports and several volumes of tracts. The Society expresses a very lively interest in the operations of this Fraternity. It has two Chapels, under the care of efficient clergymen, and its plans of operation are almost identical with our own. Similar Institutions exist in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, and are believed to be in a good degree successful.

In our own country, we are most happy to say, the cause of city missions is advancing with a steady step. During the last year, Associations for this object have been formed both at Cincinnati and Portsmouth. In the latter place, the Ministry has been established several months, and has already met with great encouragement.

From the Treasurer's Annual Report, it appears that the sum of \$2,090 04 has been subscribed by the several associated Churches, to defray the current expenses of the year, and that there is now on hand the sum of \$642 02. In addition to this amount, \$8,246 00 have been subscribed for the purpose of building the new Church.

The Society has recently applied to the Legislature to be incorporated, and an act has been granted authorizing it to hold real and personal estate to an amount which shall not exceed in its annual income the sum of \$7,000, exclusive of its Chapels, and the land on which they stand. This act has been accepted, and the Society duly organized under it.

But the question may be asked, whether this Ministry has effected much out of the immediate circle within which it has operated? Has it made itself felt throughout the humbler classes as such? Is there not just as much poverty, crime and degradation in the city as heretofore? The inquiry is an interesting one, but its discussion would lead to a much more thorough investigation of the comparative condition of our city, at different periods, than is consistent with this Report. And, after all, we apprehend but little reliance could be placed on any conclusions we might arrive at by such a process. Even if it were beyond all question, that poverty and vice, of vari-

ous kinds, had increased among us, which we are by no means disposed to allow, it would not follow from this circumstance alone that the efforts of this Association had been without effect. The fact very probably might be the consequence, not of the inefficiency of the Ministry, but of a great increase of demoralizing influences in society at large. We know, indeed, that an insane spirit of speculation, extravagance and luxury has, within a few years, been sweeping over the land; and it would be strange if the physical and moral degradation of large numbers in the humbler classes were not the sad consequence. The efforts of a few individuals, be they ever so useful, cannot be expected to overcome the pernicious influences arising from the great movements of society. Besides, it may be that particular circumstances have brought the poverty and vices of certain classes more into public view, though they existed to an equal extent before. The season may have been unusually severe, or a cessation of accustomed employments may have occurred. The police may have become more efficient, and thus more crimes be detected, and placed on the record book. In short, this Fraternity, we are persuaded, has done and is doing much good, though it has not yet accomplished all that we wish to see accomplished; but it is not reasonable to expect that its three or four Ministers, zealous and efficient though they may be, should be able to reach the whole mass of poverty, wretchedness and crime that exists in our city. To do this, society must put forth its energies to an extent of which it has not yet even a conception. More, much more, indeed, may and ought to be done through this Ministry than is attempted; a combined effort should be made for its wider and more permanent extension.

At least one or two additional Ministers should at once be attached to each of our Chapels, who should devote their whole time in going about from house to house, — exerting everywhere their personal influence, and obtaining from all a better knowledge of their character and wants. Such an addition would add materially to the results already obtained. These results are replete with encouragement. They demand at our hands the outpouring of grateful hearts to the Author of all good. Let us endeavor to add to them. Let us resolve in all humility and trustfulness, that in so far as depends upon us the work shall not fail of complete success for want of any aid which we can give to it.

Per order of the Committee,

HENRY B. ROGERS, *Sec'ry.*

Boston, March 23, 1839.

OFFICERS
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.
1839—40.

PRESIDENT.

SAMUEL GREELE.

S. K. LOTHROP, *Secretary.*

ELIJAH COBB, *Treasurer.*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

SAMUEL GREELE,

S. K. LOTHROP,

ELIJAH COBB,

RICHARD SULLIVAN,

H. B. ROGERS.

DELEGATES
TO THE
CENTRAL BOARD
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.
1839—40.

Second Church.

Rev. CHANDLER ROBBINS, ELISHA JACOBS,
NATHANIEL THAYER, JR., JAMES DAVIS,
 GEORGE P. BANGS.

Brattle Street.

Rev. S. K. LOTHROP, EBENEZER DALE,
GEORGE W. BOND, THADDEUS NICHOLS,
 RICHARD SULLIVAN.

New North.

Rev. FRANCIS PARKMAN, WILLIAM PALFREY,
THOMAS E. LILLIE, JOHN B. HAMMETT,
 BEZA LINCOLN.

New South.

Rev. ALEXANDER YOUNG, FRANKLIN GREENE,
GEORGE WHITTEMORE, WILLIAM T. ANDREWS,
 JOSEPH COTTON.

King's Chapel.

Rev. F. W. P. GREENWOOD, JONATHAN CHAPMAN,
HENRY B. ROGERS, Rev. Dr. TUCKERMAN,
 AARON BALDWIN.

Federal Street.

REV. E. S. GANNETT, GEORGE S. HILLARD,
THOMAS TARBELL, JONATHAN PHILLIPS,
 SAMUEL GREELE.

Holls Street.

REV. JOHN PIERPONT, JOHN J. MAY,
HENRY SMITH, SAMUEL MAY,
HENRY BASS.

Twelfth Congregational.

Rev. SAMUEL BARRETT, BENJAMIN STEVENS,
ELIJAH COBB, LEWIS G. PRAY,
GEORGE H. KUHN.

Purchase Street.

REV. GEORGE RIPLEY, GEORGE CALLENDER,
CALVIN W. CLARK, ISAAC WILLIAMS,
ABNER BOURNE.

THE
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY ISAAC R. BUTTS.
1840.



REPORT.

THE smiles of Providence have continued to rest upon the great charity we have in charge, and the Executive Committee, in presenting their Sixth Annual Report, feel that they have just cause to congratulate the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, and the religious societies, whose organ and instrument it is, both on the prosperous condition of its affairs, as a charitable institution, and on the high moral influence it is exerting on the character and destinies of our beloved city.

The past year may be regarded, perhaps, as the most eventful that has occurred since the organization of the Fraternity. These events have not, at least all of them have not in their first aspects, been of a gladdening and favorable character; but in their ultimate issues, we trust, they will all contribute to the advancement of our cause, give it a firmer establishment in the confidence and affections of the community, and serve to extend and perpetuate its influence.

The Committee would briefly review the leading incidents of the past year, alluding first, however, to one who

is worthy of being first mentioned on this occasion. It is well known that for the last two or three years, the health of Dr. Tuckerman has not permitted him to take an active part in the labors and duties of the Ministry at Large. His interest in it, however, has been undiminished, and the young men, his associates and co-adjutors in the work, have always enjoyed his sympathy and counsel, and had the benefit of his large experience and practical wisdom. Of these, however, they are at present deprived. During the last summer and autumn his health failed so much, that with the advice of his physician, he sailed for Cuba some months since, in the hope that a change of scene and a warmer climate might have a favorable effect. Letters have been received several times since his arrival; but the last accounts are unfavorable. A visit to the interior of the island had had an injurious effect. Hope is entertained that he may return, restored to a measure of health. The issue is in his hands, who knoweth what is best for his servants.

On entering upon the duties of the past year, the Committee felt that one of their chief objects of solicitude and effort would be to procure the residue of the funds, requisite to meet the contracts, which had been made for the erection of Suffolk Street Chapel. In this work, they were soon cheered by the donation of a thousand dollars received through the hands of Richard S. Fay, Esq., made in the spirit of that charity, commended by our Savior, which seeks to "let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth." The name of this benefactor of the Fraternity was withheld. But he is known of God, and has a better reward than the strongest expressions of our gratitude,—the approbation of his own heart. The con-

ditions of the gift were, that an equal sum, in addition to the sum already subscribed, should be procured by the Committee by further subscriptions. Through the efforts, principally of Mr. H. B. Rogers, whose wise counsels and efficient labors in this cause entitle him to the grateful regard of every friend of the Ministry at Large, the Committee succeeded in meeting these conditions, and in securing thereby the addition of two thousand dollars to the funds for the erection of Suffolk Street Chapel. The corner stone of this Chapel was laid with appropriate religious services on the 23d of May. The last public service performed by Dr. Tuckerman was to offer the prayer on that occasion.

Early in July, the Committee received a communication from Rev. F. T. Gray, the purport of which was, that the state of his health required that he should have some assistance in his duties, and that the field of labor and usefulness, connected with the Pitts Street Chapel, was wide enough to occupy the time and task the energies of two devoted and faithful ministers. In this opinion the Committee fully concurred. At this time Mr. R. C. Waterston was about finishing his preparatory studies at Cambridge. He was already partially engaged in this ministry, coming into the city every Sabbath, and devoting as much time to it as his other occupations would permit. The Committee deemed it of the utmost importance to secure his undivided strength and attention to this work. They therefore invited him to enter the Ministry at Large, as colleague with Rev. F. T. Gray, at Pitts Street Chapel, and in common with our whole community, were highly gratified when that invitation was accepted. Mr. Waterston entered upon his duties imme-

diately upon leaving Cambridge, about the middle of July, with the understanding that his ordination was to be deferred till the autumn. The Committee contemplated this result with great satisfaction. They anticipated long years of united labor on the part of these faithful servants of Christ. They felt that the efficiency of each would be promoted and increased by that union, that new and better modes of operation and influence might arise from it, and that, through their associated exertions, the Pitts Street Chapel and the field of labor connected with it would present a manifestation of this Ministry, that would convince the doubting and gratify the utmost wishes of its friends.

These anticipations, so far as the associated labors of these two gentlemen were concerned, were not destined to be fulfilled. A disappointment, as severe as it was unexpected, awaited them; and one, who, since the withdrawal of Dr. Tuckerman from active duty, had been regarded as the right arm of the Ministry at Large, was to be transferred to another sphere of service. In October, Mr. Gray received an invitation to become colleague Pastor with Rev. Mr. Dean, over the society in Bulfinch Street. This invitation, after mature deliberation, he felt it to be his duty to accept, and accordingly resigned his situation as one of the Ministers of this Fraternity. His connection with us ceased on the last Sunday in November. His services in this cause, his zeal, fidelity, success, his readiness to spend and be spent in promoting it, are too well known to make it necessary for us to recount or set them forth. They have brought their reward in the approbation of his own heart, and a high place in the grateful affections of many other hearts, and especially

and above all in the good they have effected. In the decision to leave us, he unquestionably acted from a pure sense of duty and a sincere desire to be useful, from a conviction that the hand of Providence had opened the door of another vineyard, and invited him to enter and labor therein; and while we regret his loss, it is but justice to award to him the public testimony of our gratitude and the expression of our cordial wish, that the blessing of Almighty God may ever rest upon his person and accompany his labors.

The loss of Mr. Gray from the Ministry at Large would have been a very serious evil, had he left his place at Pitts Street Chapel entirely vacant. Fortunately this was not the case. Mr. Waterston, having been already four months associated with him, had become familiar with the duties of the situation, had secured a place in the affections and confidence of the worshippers at the Chapel, and made himself widely acquainted with the moral condition and wants of many for whose benefit that Chapel was erected. He was ordained on the day on which Mr. Gray's resignation took effect, and has since then been prosecuting his ministry with fidelity and success. In his Semi-annual Report, made to the Executive Committee a few days since, he says,

“ From the time that the various duties have devolved upon me, there have been three services every Sabbath, the Chapel having been at all times well filled, and generally crowded. The seats have been again assigned, and the children who were formerly placed in the rear of the Church, are now seated with their parents. On the first Sunday of each month, the body pews are reserved for the children, and all the services are appropriate to

them. At other times the services are conducted as is usual in our churches. During the winter a meeting has been held each Friday evening. In January, I commenced a course of lectures on the Geography of Palestine, which continued to the present month. The lectures were well attended, and some who had not been in the habit of attending meeting on the Sabbath, became interested in these lectures, and have since attended the Chapel. I have lately commenced a course of lectures to Young Men, and it has been a source of the greatest satisfaction to see so many eager listeners in the vigor of youth and manhood. We have also had prayer meetings on every Tuesday evening at private houses, which have been, to both old and young, a source of great pleasure and profit, and which have, beyond a doubt, contributed greatly to awaken a spirit of piety."

After speaking of the Sunday School, which has an average attendance of three hundred and twenty scholars and fifty teachers ; of the Sewing School, in which, during the winter, over a hundred girls have been taught the use of the needle, by ladies who voluntarily meet for the purpose ; of the Franklin Association, whose lectures and debates are held every Wednesday evening ; of the Library, numbering over five hundred volumes, belonging to the Chapel, and accessible to all who attend it ; and of visiting, as one of the most important parts of this ministry, he says ; "There is yet another subject upon which I would speak. In order that the light of the Gospel may penetrate the lowest depths of our community, that the message of truth may be delivered wherever there is a soul to hear, I propose, if I can find convenient rooms in private dwellings, to hold, as often as consistent with other duties, religious

evening meetings, when we may call in those who are sunk in vice and who never attend the house of God." He closes his Report with observing, that "there has been through the past season, much sickness and want, and the labors of this ministry would have been painful in the extreme, if temporal as well as spiritual relief could not have been afforded. I would, therefore, express my deep sense of obligation to all those who have placed in my hands the means of relief, and would state that my account of receipts and expenditures may be examined at any time by those who have thus manifested their kindness. All who, in this way, aid the Minister at Large in his labors, give a substantial token of their confidence, and enable him to do immeasurably more good in his pastoral walks. I will only add," he concludes, "much, very much remains to be done. A great work is before us. May God bless our labors, and crown them with success."

The Committee present these extracts from Mr. Waterston's Report, as gratifying exhibitions of the spirit, in which he is laboring, and of the condition of the ministry under his charge.

The condition and prospects of the mission prosecuted by Rev. J. T. Sargent in the southern section of the city, are no less gratifying. As we have stated, to make provision for the payment of the Chapel, building in this quarter of the city, was early and constantly an object of solicitude and effort to the Committee. Various plans to increase, during the autumn, the amount of subscriptions, proved unsuccessful, owing to the pecuniary embarrassment which pressed upon the community. The Report of the Treasurer, in January, indicated that over and

above the amount then subscribed and paid, about \$3,500 would be required to meet the contracts for the erection of the Chapel, and to furnish it suitably for public worship. To attempt to raise this sum by further subscriptions, had proved fruitless. In this state of things, at the suggestion of some members of the Fraternity, who were also members of the Society for Promoting Christianity in India, a vote was passed at the Quarterly Meeting, in January, authorizing the Executive Committee, to apply to this Society for an appropriation of its funds, in favor of the Fraternity; it being understood that there was no longer any prospect of a useful or successful application of them, to the direct purpose in behalf of which they had been subscribed, and that the question, "what appropriation should be made of them?" had been matter of discussion in the Society.

In accordance with this vote, the Committee immediately addressed a communication to the Society for Promoting Christianity in India, setting forth the condition of the pecuniary affairs of the Fraternity, and asking an appropriation of the funds of that Society in its favor, as an Institution, similar in its spirit and character to the purpose for which those funds were originally subscribed, and tending indirectly to accomplish it. This communication was laid before a meeting of the Society, regularly called, and, after full discussion, and mature deliberation, it was voted to comply with the request it contained, and the funds of the Society for Promoting Christianity in India, were accordingly transferred to us, and are now in the hands of our Treasurer.

This may justly be regarded as the most important event that has occurred in the history of the Fraternity.

It secures it, we think, a permanent establishment, as one of the Institutions of our city. It enables us to take immediate possession of Suffolk Street Chapel, free from all incumbrance, and the residue of the funds, together with what is expected to be realised from the sale of Friend Street Chapel, will be so nearly sufficient to pay off the debt on Pitts Street Chapel, that we may confidently hope, at no very distant day, to possess that Chapel, also, free from all incumbrance. With these two Chapels relieved from all pecuniary claims upon them, the Committee feel that the Fraternity is placed in a most favorable position. Its annual expenses can be easily met by the annual contributions from the branches. It has two permanent centres, from which, by the addition of one or more ministers to each of these Chapels, it can extend the sphere of its operations so as to embrace nearly all of the city. Our warmest gratitude is due to the members of the Society for the Promotion of Christianity in India, for the benefit they have thus conferred upon us, and we feel confident that every succeeding year will bear testimony to them, that they have made a wise and judicious appropriation of their money. Indeed, it seems difficult to find, among our various Institutions and Charities, any one whose character and object are in more exact accordance with the purpose, for which the funds of the Society for Promoting Christianity were originally subscribed, than the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches. That was a missionary purpose. Such is the purpose of the Fraternity. That was to diffuse christian truth, and christian influences and privileges, among those who do not enjoy them. The Fraternity seeks to do the same; and if, through the enlarged means thus conferred upon it, it can

succeed, if it can succeed in making this city thoroughly christian in all the influences within, and all the influences that go forth from it, through commercial relations and intercourse, may it not be believed that more will thus be done ultimately, even for the diffusion of Christianity in India, than could have been done by the direct expenditure of this money in that country? The Committee cannot but feel confident, that the members of the Society for Promoting Christianity in India, will ever have the approbation of their own hearts, and of this community, in the decision they have made.

Immediately on being secure of the means to pay for it, the Committee pressed forward, as fast as possible, the finishing and furnishing of the Chapel in Suffolk Street. It was dedicated by appropriate religious services on Wednesday the 5th of February. This Chapel is larger every way than the one in Pitts Street, though corresponding to it, in its internal plan. On the lower floor is a spacious Vestry, or Sunday School Room, 50½ feet by 48. Adjoining this, are two commodious rooms, 18 feet by 24, communicating with each other by sliding doors. Above them is the Chapel, 68 feet by 50½, containing 88 pews on the lower floor, and 6 in the gallery for singers. The arrangements of the Chapel are, in every way, commodious and appropriate. Through the personal efforts of Mr. Sargent, means were raised to furnish the Chapel with an organ and lamps. A communion service was presented by J. M. Fesenden. A communion table, of mahogany, was presented by Wm. Fiske and others, and a neat and valuable clock, the gift of an individual, understood to be a member of the New North Society, but whose name is not known, was put up on the gallery in

the Chapel. The Committee would thus publicly acknowledge these gifts. The dedication and opening of the Chapel have excited much interest in that quarter of the city.

In his Semi-Annual Report, presented a few days since to the Executive Committee, Mr. Sargent says,—

“Since the dedication of Suffolk Street Chapel, the success of the means you employ there, has far surpassed my expectations.—It is already about as well filled as most of our churches, and I receive several applications for seats, (on an average three or four,) every week. We have three Sabbath services, all of which are well attended. The number of families was doubled within the first fortnight. The number of slips on the lower floor, is 88. These are occupied, at present, by 112 families, in regular attendance every Sabbath. Of these 112 families, 86 are too poor to go elsewhere. Twenty-six might support the expense of other churches, and of these twenty-six, I believe about ten or twelve own pews in other churches. If it be asked why these families are admitted? I ask, *why not, so long as there is room, after all the poorer families are accommodated*, so long as they have no other place of worship sufficiently accessible, and so long as they contribute, as they do, for the support of the Chapel and its interests, in various ways? These families, let it be remembered, are residents on this side of the Roxbury line, who formerly attended worship on the other side, but are desirous of transferring their relations to the nearest place of worship in the city. They are allowed, for the present, to do so, on the *express condition* that they give something, in proportion to their ability, for the support of religion, as they would elsewhere, and, also, on condition

that they give place, whenever their seats are wanted by others. With both these conditions, they readily comply. The primary objects of the Chapel are never lost sight of. I give it distinctly to be understood, that the Chapel is *for the poor*, and that, if at this moment, there were poor families enough in that neighborhood to fill such a Chapel, or who wanted to come, none others would be admitted. Many of the families, (which attend on these conditions) are small, consisting of not more than two, or perhaps three, individuals, so that, in many cases, two families occupy a pew."

"The principle," Mr. Sargent continues in his Report, "on which I proceeded in the disposition of seats, was to see first, all the poor families in that neighborhood, to see them all well accommodated, to keep a standing advertisement ever since at the Chapel door, requesting all other families of the poor, who come into that vicinity, or wish connexion with the Chapel, to send me their names and they shall be well provided for. Thus, the understanding is that other families, not strictly of this class, will recede as those come in, or claim their places, and the Chapel become more and more distinctively a Chapel for the poor.

"There is no ground, as it seems to me, for the fear sometimes expressed, that these other families will exclude the poor. It cannot be, if the minister is faithful to the main purpose of these Chapels, or if the poor are faithful to the privileges offered them.

"But, after all, is there not a great deal of misconception as to who *is*, and who is *not* poor among the worshippers in our free Chapels? We judge too much by external and equivocal signs. A very common remark of

the stranger who enters our Chapels, is,—‘Why, these people are not all poor, are they?’ ‘They look very respectably,’ &c. Now what does such a stranger expect to see? One would think that he expected to see a congregation all dressed in rags. He forgets that pride of appearance is as strong with the poor as the rich. He forgets that the greatest exertions are made by them, to appear well and respectably clad on the Sabbath, and that often the dress which he points out, as indicating in the wearer a prosperous condition, was bestowed in charity. Their dress on that day is no fair indication of their condition at home, or of their worldly resources. But even allowing it was, allowing that all who appear ‘well off,’ as the phrase is, really are so, what then? Are the poor to be penned up and made to feel that none others can be allowed, or are willing to come among them? Surely not. The only decent plea, on which other families can be excluded, is, ‘There is no room for you.’ So long as there is room which others do not want, so long as they have no other place where they can go, and so long as they *pay* for the privilege of worshipping at our Chapel, let them come.”

“But does not the admission of such families operate in some other way, it may be asked, to the exclusion of the poor? Not at all, that I can perceive. In no case, to my knowledge, is a single poor family thereby deprived of the place they wish, or of inclination to occupy it. On the contrary, the more they see of a disposition in others to mingle with them in the sanctuary, the more readily will they avail of the connection. A very common impression among the poor is, that the rich will neither admit them to their churches, nor come to their chapels,

and that the object of the Chapel is to deepen the line of separation. In [so far, then, as we do away this erroneous impression, we do them an essential service."

"On the above conditions, then, let other families come for a time. The number of such families cannot be large nor their connection permanent. The evil, if it be one, will cure itself, as these families recede when others come in. There are, besides, many ways in which the Chapel at the South-End could not get along well without them. They are of essential aid in furnishing teachers,—as instructors, also, in the sewing school, as props to the minister, who could not otherwise command the sympathy and co-operation he requires. The sphere of my duty seems to be daily enlarging as that part of the city becomes more settled and populous. There is every prospect of our Chapel being crowded much sooner than we expected."

After having thus ably discussed the state of things at the South-End the propriety of admitting, for the present, to the Suffolk Street Chapel, some not strictly of the class of persons for whose especial benefit it was erected, Mr. Sargent concludes his Report with some statistical information, which the Committee lay before the Fraternity.

"Living, as I do," he says, "and as I shall be obliged to for a few months longer, at a considerable distance from the Chapel, the number of my visits is somewhat less than they otherwise would be. They have not averaged more than three or four a day during the winter. I have attended but thirteen funerals within the past year, and seventeen baptisms. Twenty have been added to the church, and our Sunday School is in a prosperous condition. The number of children connected with the school

is about 158, with 27 teachers. Nine new teachers have joined us since we entered the new Chapel. The average attendance of children in the school, is about a little less than a hundred. Owing to the isolated position of the Chapel,—the difficulty of access to it in winter without sidewalks, and the distance at which many of the children live, the attendance cannot, of course, be as great now as it will be under more favorable circumstances in the summer season. But we have everything to encourage us. There is a noble spirit of energy and zeal among our teachers, and a growing interest among all who attend at the Chapel. A large class of young men are becoming interested and efficient among us. Bible classes and teachers' meetings are frequent, and, were this the proper place, I might relate many cases of marked religious improvement. In short, the experience of less than two months in the new Chapel, shows what we may expect, and, by the blessing of God, we hope to offer you, in our next Report, most abundant fruits."

The Committee have made these long extracts from the Semi-Annual Reports, in order to let the ministers be heard for themselves; and they feel confident that these Reports, together with the retrospect of the events of the past year which has been presented, will show the condition of the affairs of the Fraternity, and the result of its labors, to be such as to gratify and encourage its friends. But the success of the past should be a stimulus to the future; it should prompt to effort, not induce to relaxation; it should increase, not abate our zeal. It should light up in our hearts, not the momentary gleam of gladness and gratitude, but the steady torch of perseverance and hope. we have done something, but not everything. We have

made a beginning, but not an end. We have opened a fountain, but it must be deepened and replenished, that rivers of life may flow from it to make glad the city of our God.

The Committee would make no extravagant assertions or demands; they would utter no reproach or rebuke. They feel that acknowledgment is due to most of our religious societies, and to several individuals in particular, for the interest they have felt in this cause, and for the munificent manner in which they have contributed to its support and advancement. And it is because they are confident that this interest is felt, that they would strongly and directly appeal to it. More new Chapels are not, at present, needed. At least, it is not desirable or expedient that attempts should be made, at present, to erect others. But it is desirable, it is but reasonable and just, that persons devoting their time and strength to this ministry, should be honorably and fairly remunerated. It is desirable, it is important, that others should be invited to enter the field and labor with those already there.

The remarks of Mr. Waterston, quoted or alluded to in a former part of this Report, touching the importance of visiting, as an instrument of this ministry, and of holding religious meetings frequently in private houses, are sound and just, and he might, in this way, unquestionably do great good, and reach the heart, quicken the conscience, redeem and save the souls of many who are not reached by the present operations of this ministry. But he cannot be visiting and preaching from house to house all the week, and yet be prepared, or prepare himself satisfactorily for the services of the Chapel on Sunday. Had he some one to share the labor with him, an as-

sociate, a colleague, to work with him, in the Chapel, in the house, and by the way-side, then this might be done, and this ministry, to use his own words, "be made to penetrate to the lowest depths of the community." It is important this should be done. It is important that the Executive Committee should have the means, the next year, of increasing the salary of one of the ministers now employed, and of securing permanently, or for a few months at a time, the services of others, to assist them in their duties, that more time may be given by each to visiting and preaching from house to house, and thus the field of labor, connected with each Chapel, be more thoroughly examined and known, and the influences of this ministry be made to distil like the dew upon the very lowest and most obscure, the most neglected and forsaken plants in the vineyard of our Lord. The Committee feel that *three thousand dollars* is the very least sum that will be required, and ought to be raised, for the support and advancement of this ministry in the coming year. This is an average of a little over three hundred dollars, to each of the branches of the Fraternity, and including the societies, which, though not regular branches of the Fraternity, have yet generally contributed generously to this object, it is an average of something less than three hundred dollars to each society. Cannot and ought not each of these societies to raise this sum? Is there any object or institution of charity, presenting stronger claims than this? It is important, also, that this sum should be early collected. The operations of the Fraternity have been crippled, and its Treasurer embarrassed often, during the past year by the tardiness of the several branches in collecting and paying in their contributions. It is desirable

that the Committee should early know what they may rely upon, what will be the means at their command for the year. This is too obvious to need to be further urged. The Committee, therefore, would respectfully suggest and urge upon each of the branches to collect and pay in their contributions as early as the first week in May.

In making these remarks and suggestions, the Committee do not feel that they are guilty of any extravagance. They would not exalt a favorite project to the disparagement of others. They would not cherish, in themselves or others, a hasty and impulsive enthusiasm, nor excite in any, visionary and utopian hopes. They do not suppose that our city will be made a perfect paradise, in which sin shall have no power and vice no victim, through the ministry to the poor and this alone; but they do contend, that this ministry, in its past results and future operations, presents a prospect of usefulness, a means of bringing Christianity to bear upon the community more deeply and thoroughly than it has before, a hope of raising up the fallen children of our heavenly Father from the graves of corruption and the sleep of moral death, and restoring them to the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and of giving them, though in the bonds of poverty, the freedom and the joy of virtue, and the riches of everlasting life, we contend, that it presents a rational prospect of doing this to an extent which should secure to it, not a feverish, fluctuating, superficial interest, but a place in the strong and deep seated affections of our souls, and cause it to awaken, not a momentary excitement now and then, but draw towards it that calm earnestness of feeling, too strong almost for agitation, too deep for hasty impulses, which shall carry it forward gently

but powerfully, with a sedate, steadfast and determined zeal.

The Committee intended to present, in this Report, some notices of what is doing in other cities of our own land and in England, in this same cause. But the limits of this Report are already so extended, that only a very brief glance can be made at this subject. In England, we know that missions or ministries to the poor are established in the cities of London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol, supported by that body of Christians, who hold like precious faith with ourselves. The difference in the condition of the society, has caused some difference in the modes of operation pursued by those missions compared with our own. In general they are conducted on a similar plan, for similar purposes with our own, and are doing much to raise up from the dust of ignorance, degradation, and wretchedness the poor and depressed portions of the population of those cities, and to place them upon the rock of knowledge and virtue, and open to them the joys of christian purity and christian hope. There is one suggestion, however, in the last Report of Rev. Mr. Johns, minister to the poor at Liverpool, worthy of consideration, and, we think, of adoption among ourselves. It is that of a *Friendly Loan Society*, the loans to be made upon such security as can be given, and to be repaid, generally, with *interest*. This plan Mr. Johns has already had in operation to a very limited extent, and he says "the amount of distress thus undegradingly relieved, has been as great as it was affecting, the loans having been in every case repaid with regularity and thankfulness." He proposes the formation of a society for this purpose, and looks forward to its operation with the

assurance of complete success. "It will do good," he says, "that will strongly counter-work the evil of many well-intentioned, but most injudicious and injurious charities. In itself it will not belong to them even by name. It will compromise no poor man's independence. After receiving its full benefit, he will only stand the *more erect*." It can hardly be doubted that such mode of operation would do good here. The poor are often perplexed for a little money, which they will not beg and cannot borrow, at least in the usual way, for none will loan on the security they can give. But if the minister to the poor had money to loan them, on such security as they can give, and relying for security principally on his knowledge of their character, and the influence he exerts on them, they might often be relieved, comforted, and encouraged. The Committee ask the attention of this meeting, and of the Ministers at Large, to this subject. Of the Missions in London, Manchester, and Bristol, the Committee have not been able to procure the most recent Reports; but it is well known that a deep interest is felt by our brethren in those cities, and that the work has been prosecuted with zeal and success. In various places in our own land, also, efforts continue to be made in this cause by Christians of several denominations. In Cincinnati, particularly, Mr. Perkins continues to prosecute the work with great wisdom, fidelity, zeal, and success. Much of his time and strength, however, have hitherto been necessarily devoted to objects which are here accomplished by that excellent institution, the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism. He has, as yet, no Chapel, or lecture room, or established religious services for the poor. His three great objects, as stated in a recent communication

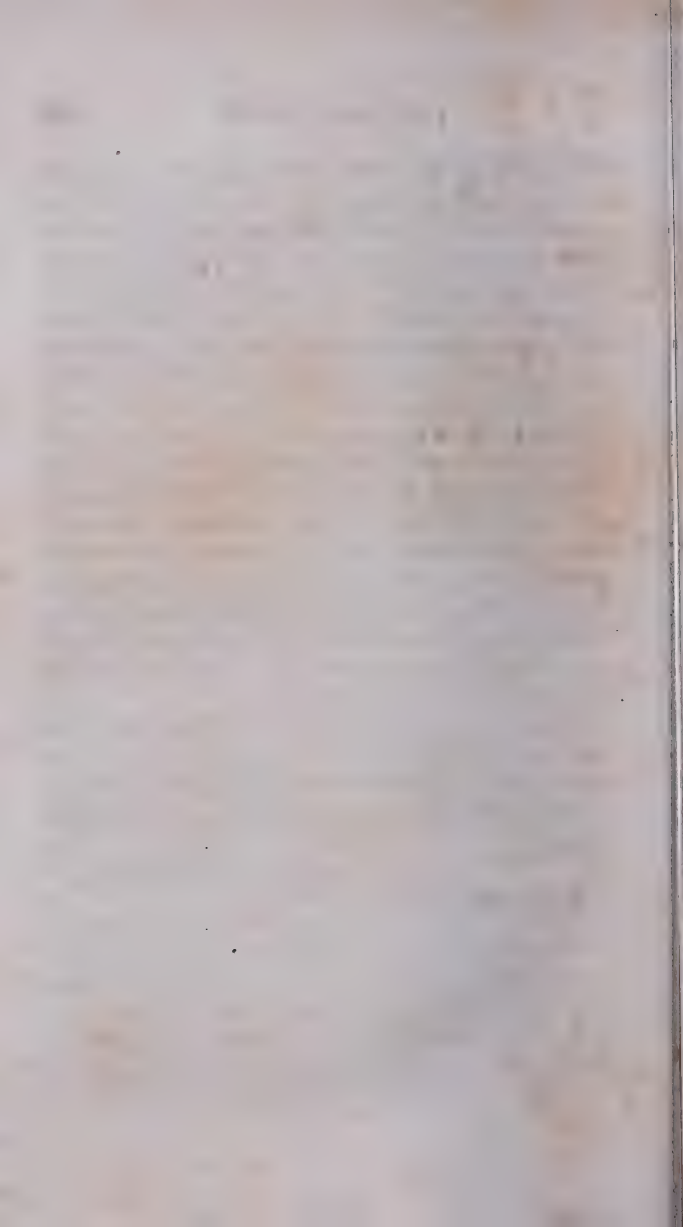
addressed to the supporters and friends of the Ministry at Large in Cincinnati, have been, 1st, to bring about co-operation among those relieving the poor; 2d, to convince the public that poverty is not to be relieved by alms-giving, but by intellectual and moral cultivation; and 3d, to become personally widely acquainted with the poor, and act upon them individually. For this purpose his time is spent in visiting constantly, and in offering instruction, consolation, and exhortation, from house to house, as needed. He is unquestionably doing great good, and his example will serve, and is serving, to wake up other cities of the West to a perception of their interests and their duty in this matter. And evidence might be presented, were it needed, from various sources, to show that there is a growing interest in this subject in very many of the cities of our land, and that the public conscience is widely coming to the conviction, that the moral and spiritual wants of poverty must be met, and a moral and spiritual remedy applied to its evils.

With these encouraging signs from abroad, let us not be wanting in zeal at home. Here, where this light was first kindled, let it burn with a bright and steady flame.

All of which is respectfully submitted, for the Committee,

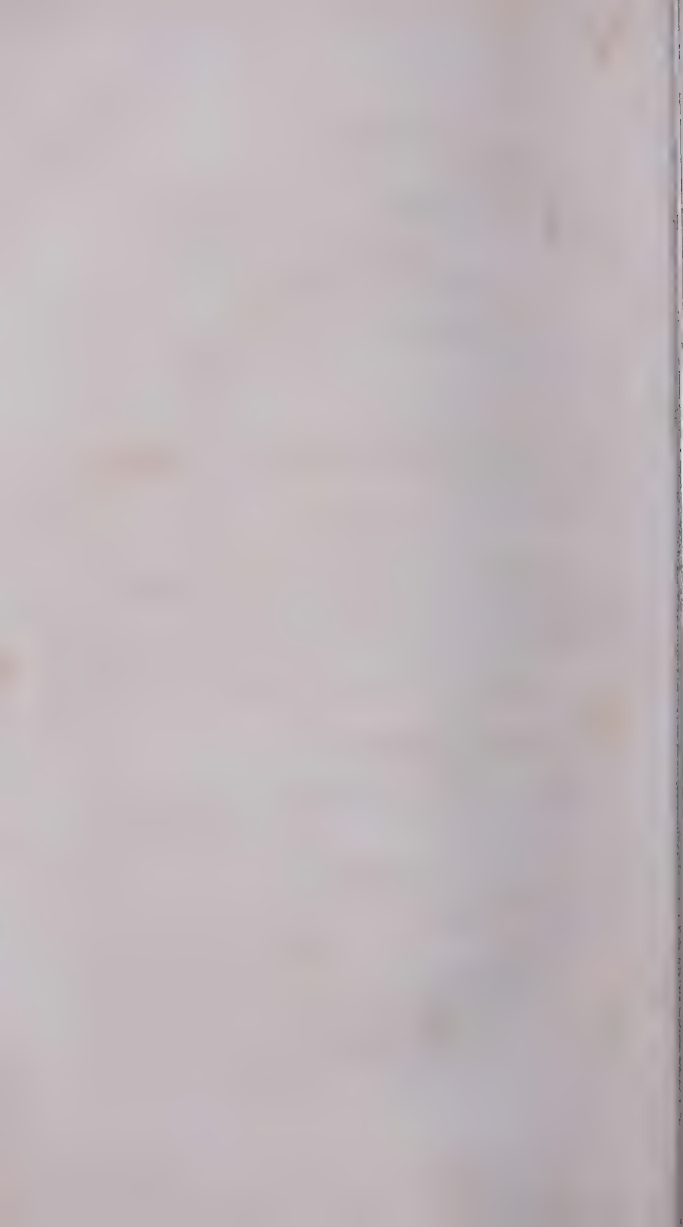
S. K. LOTHROP, *Sec'y.*

Boston, April 2d, 1840.



THE
QUARTERLY REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES,
AND THE
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS
OF THE
MINISTERS AT LARGE;
PRESENTED AT THE
QUARTERLY MEETING, OCT. 4, 1840.

BOSTON:
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No. 2 School Street,
1840.



QUARTERLY REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

THE Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, in presenting their Second Quarterly Report for the year 1840, have gratefully to acknowledge, that such is the present position of the affairs of the Fraternity, that they have little of importance to communicate. Nothing has occurred during the last quarter to shake our confidence in the excellence of the institution we have in charge, or make us anxious or doubtful about its hold on the confidence and attachment of the public mind. Nothing has occurred to mar the pleasure we have had in witnessing the good effected by it, or diminish our hope of its growing and permanent usefulness. During the last quarter, the grounds, sidewalks, fences, &c. around the Suffolk Street Chapel have been finished, the building accepted from the contractor, the contract and all the other debts paid, and the Report of the building committee to this effect handed in, which will be laid before you this evening. From this Report it will appear that there has been paid upon the Chapel the sum of \$16,052.08. Of this amount, \$11,365 was raised by subscription, and the remainder, \$4687 08, has been paid from the funds received from the Society for Promoting Christianity in India. The whole amount received from this Society was \$4843.08. Of this fund there remains in the hands of our Treasurer the sum of \$156.08 together with

the Buffalo Bond for \$1000, exclusive of interest. From the signers of this bond we have heard nothing since the meeting of this Board. The letter of our Treasurer, addressed to the signers of the bond, has never been answered, nor have the Executive Committee heard of any communications from them having been received either by Dr. Parkman or Mr. Gannett, since the opinion of the Executive Committee, expressed in a letter to Mr. Gannett, and subsequently approved and sustained by the decision of the Board, was forwarded to them. Until otherwise advised or instructed by this Board, the Executive Committee will persevere in the course then adopted, of holding the bond, but not pressing for the immediate payment either of principal or interest. If on the return of prosperity to the city of Buffalo, this bond should be ultimately paid, with interest, there will then be the sum of nearly \$1500, to be applied from the India fund towards liquidating the debt on the Pitts Street Chapel.

The lot and building of the Friend Street Chapel have been usually valued by us at \$3000. Should they be sold for this sum in the course of a few months, there will then be, uniting this sum with the remainder of the India fund, \$3150 in our treasury, independent of the Buffalo bond, which can be immediately applied towards liquidating the debt on the Pitts Street Chapel. This will reduce the mortgage on that Chapel to something less than \$5000. Should we realize the Buffalo bond, before the expiration of the mortgage, which will be in 1842, there will then be something less than \$4000 remaining on the mortgage to be raised by subscription, which of course must be done, before we attempt to add to the number of our chapels, or to extend in a great degree our operations.

This is the position of the general financial affairs of the Fraternity. With regard to the income and expenses of the current year, they will probably both equal the estimates which were made at the opening of the year. The contributions already received from two branches, the Federal and Brattle Street Branches, are \$1053.25. This, together with the balance in the treasury at the close of

the last year, makes a sum of \$1390.59, which has been nearly adequate to the expenses of the Fraternity up to the first of the current month. There has still been some delay on the part of the branches in making their collections and payments to our Treasurer. No inconvenience has as yet arisen from the delay, and it is probable the matter will be attended to, as soon as the arrival of the 10th of November next allows people to realize that there is something else to think of and to do in the world, besides electing a President of the United States. It is understood that a good spirit of interest and zeal in our behalf prevails in the several branches, and if the others do proportionably as well as the two which have already contributed, there can be no doubt that the income of the present year will be adequate to its expenses. Having presented the above brief statement of the business affairs of the Fraternity, the Committee turn with pleasure to the position and influences of the institution we have in charge, in respect to the great moral and religious purposes it aims to accomplish.

In this respect the Committee feel that they have reason to congratulate themselves and the Fraternity, and to hold in reverence and gratitude the memory of those, the living and the dead, who have contributed of their wealth, their influence, and their labors, to the formation and establishment of this institution.

The Semi-annual Reports of the Ministers at Large, which will be laid before you this evening, like those which have preceded them from the same source, show that we have zealous, faithful, persevering men engaged in this great enterprise, men who bring to the work the same earnestness of purpose, the same spirit of love, the same devotion of heart and soul, with which the work was originally conceived and commenced; and he who reads their Reports, who goes to their chapels, who listens to their discourses, who visits the families wherein their influence is exerted, he who gathers all the evidence which these afford, of the results of this Ministry, he must be skeptical indeed not to believe that this institution is

striking deep into the foundations of society, is doing much to dry up the fountains of sin and crime, is diffusing influences that brighten the aspect and prospects of this city for coming generations, is scattering seed among the poor, and the forsaken, and the outcast, and the wandering, that shall spring up and bear fruit unto everlasting life. Let us not stay our hand, then, in this great work. Let not our zeal grow slack and cold; let us remember that watchfulness, effort and perseverance, are the only pledges of success. Faithful in these respects, let us look for the continued smile of God's Providence upon the work which has been thus far so signally blessed.

All which is respectfully submitted for the Committee.

S. K. LOTHROP,

Secretary.

Boston, Oct. 4, 1840.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF J. T. SARGENT.

Since my last Report, the customary circle of my duties has been interrupted only by an absence of five weeks during the summer months. To this intermission of labor I was forced by the state of my health and the consequent advice of physicians. Thus constrained I left home for the Virginia Springs, on the 17th of July, and returned on the 25th of August last.

During this interval of absence, I had the good fortune to secure the services of Rev. Mr. Heywood, late of the Theological School in Cambridge, for the supply of Suffolk Street Chapel pulpit; and will take this occasion to assure you that his services, both in preaching and visiting, were highly acceptable to all connected with the chapel. If, indeed, by any cause in the providence of God, this ministry should experience the removal of its present

incumbent, or the need of another, I doubt not your own desires would fix (even as I know his own hopes do) in the selection of Mr. Heywood for the vacancy.

His affections are already in the work. He has proved this not only by the predilection he expresses but by the brief and faithful experience he has had. Nor ought I to omit the mention, here, of like fidelity and zeal on the part of others, — the Teachers, &c. connected with the Chapel, — during my absence. The two meetings every week, on Thursday and Friday Evenings, in the Vestry, were continued and well conducted by the superintendent of the School, and others. These meetings are productive, as we trust, of great spiritual good.

The number of families connected with the Chapel continues to increase, as do also the evidences of their growth in holiness. Our place of worship is always well attended, and with the growth of this part of our city we may expect still greater accessions. Of those few families occupying, for the present, spare seats, whom a strict rule might not include among the poor, I believe none are backward in complying with the understood condition of their connection, namely, that they pay for the privilege in proportion to their ability. This will appear, I trust, from the fact that, within the past year and a half, I have received from these six or eight families the sum of one hundred and forty-eight dollars for the purposes and expenses of the Chapel. These sums are accounted for in the minutes which I herewith enclose to your Treasurer. The fixtures and property of the Chapel are, at present, as far as I know, unencumbered with debt, with the exception of some few incidental and small expenses, which I hope to liquidate by a course of lectures. I would respectfully suggest to the Committee, in this connection, whether, on the score of economy, it may not be well to contrive some other means of warming the Chapel than the one now in use.

With the furnaces, as they now are, it is next to impossible to make the building comfortable without a great consumption of fuel. The experience of last winter con-

vinced us that something must be done to secure greater comfort and save expense. It is very evident that, from some cause or other, much of the heat passes off by the walls of the building, and is lost. There would surely seem to be no reason, why, with four furnaces, we should not be sufficiently comfortable. I can account for it only on the supposition of some defect in their construction. The bleak and exposed situation of the chapel must also be considered. Certain it is, that the children and others suffered much the last winter, and many were thus discouraged from constant attendance. The committee, I feel confident, will be anxious to remove every obstacle which affects the comfort of the worshippers, or which counteracts and impairs the success of their ministry.

Our Sunday School was never in a more flourishing or prosperous condition than at present. A lady who is now one of our teachers, and whose experience in other schools enables her to judge, has pronounced it the best regulated school she has ever seen. It is now under the superintendence of Deacon Martin Lincoln, whose fidelity, piety and zeal are worthy of all praise. We have about 200 children connected with the school ;— 104 boys and 96 girls, with 33 teachers ;—13 males, and 20 females. A large bible class conducted by Mr. Benj. F. Callender, will also be the means, ultimately, as we trust, of accessions to our number of teachers. The average attendance of children in the school is 120. The afternoon hour of the school is generally devoted to some interesting, general lesson, given, occasionally, by gentlemen from other schools who have visited us. Our only regret is, that they cannot come oftener.

After service in the afternoon, the leader of our choir, Mr. Volney Wilder, has lately been in the habit of giving the children gratuitous instruction in sacred music in the vestry. We owe much to this gentleman's interest and good taste. In aid of his benevolent plan, Messrs. Chickering & Mackay had kindly placed in the vestry a piano, on loan. The sewing school on Saturday afternoon, is conducted as usual, though the attendance is not so good

as I wish and hope to see; — seldom averaging more than thirty children, owing partly to the want of comfort in the room, and partly to the difficulty of finding ladies who can spare the time to attend to their instruction. At present we have but three such instructors. I always visit this school with such encouragement as I can offer, for I deem it not unworthy of attention as one of the means of instilling useful habits of industry, economy and thrift, which may extend far and beneficially into after years as moral defences. Our meetings in the chapel, every week, for “religious improvement and conversation,” I am gratified to find, have inspired quite a number of young men with a most praiseworthy Christian zeal. The prospect is they will be great helpers to the cause. My recent removal of residence to Dover street, may be counted among the sources of encouragement, inasmuch as it brings me more immediately in the vicinity of many families connected with the chapel. By this means the fatigue of visiting is lessened, while the number and frequency of my visits will be increased.

In conclusion I would say, that notwithstanding so much is done in our community to instil and diffuse religious principles, still, much *remains* to be done. There is still a prevailing disregard of the Sabbath among many. Our thoroughfares and avenues to the city are often infested, on the Lord’s day with idlers, who find in covert haunts, either in or out of the city, the illegal sources of disturbance to their own and the public peace. Not a few, also, even of those who abstain from any open or indecent violation of the Sabbath, are yet wanting in that respect for the occasion which would lead them to seek, stately, the places of worship. Our chapels, it is true, are well filled: — our community may be called, in the main, a church-going, a moral, even a religious community, still, the fact is too palpable to be denied, that in many minds, to say the least, very easy notions in regard to our religious institutions have obtained. Perhaps in no class of minds would such innovations or shifting of public sentiment be so likely to acquire influence as

among the proletaries. The necessity, therefore, of a zealous and persevering missionary effort in their behalf, was never greater than at the present time. The plausible speculations of the day touching the origin or validity of a Sabbath, the ministry, and the church, any question as to the claims of these institutions to respect, finds a ready response in the mind of a Sabbath-breaker, as in the breast of a spiritualist, whose aim, I willingly believe, is not so much to subvert these institutions as to purge them of their abuses and formality. I have no disposition to question the spirituality of purpose which dictates even a public discussion of these points. It originates, doubtless, in the purest motive; but all minds, (it is worth remembering) will not make the requisite discrimination, and, in so far as they do not, is there not some danger of injurious effect upon such minds? It seems to me there is, and "woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."

In so far, therefore, as the influence of the ministry you employ offers any antidote to such effect; — in so far as it helps to advance or conserve the spiritual welfare of our fellow citizens; — in so far as it wakens in them a religious faith or keeps them in it, so far will it do a good work, — a work in which your wisdom and treasures will be well expended. That your faith and my own in this work may persevere and be kept alive, and that the same kind providence which has thus far attended your efforts may continue to bless them, is my earnest and constant prayer.

Respectfully,

JOHN T. SARGENT.

BOSTON, Oct. 1, 1840.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF REV. R. C. WATERSTON.

During the past season the labors of the Ministry, in the northern and western parts of the city, have been pursued without intermission. Through the summer my time was fully occupied in preaching and in visiting from house to house. In addition to those connected with our chapels, there are many who, not being connected with any particular place of worship, send for the ministers at large, in hours of affliction. It has therefore been my lot, during the past year, to witness many scenes of sickness and distress. And if this were the only duty a minister at large were expected to perform, the Ministry would be worthy of all that has yet been done, and might properly claim from its supporters even more than is now doing.

In chambers of sickness and death, our faith in this Ministry may well be strengthened; for how could any reflecting mind hesitate, as to the duty of Christians in sending to such places those who may give counsel, and administer consolation?

It is impossible to describe my feelings, as I have stood in the habitations of sorrow, and felt that I was there not only as a sympathizing fellow-creature, but as a representative from twelve of our Christian Churches.

Could any one have stood by and seen the workings of remorse in those who have lived without God, and who have been awakened to a sense of past guilt; could they have seen the result of sin in its terrific effects; or, on the other hand, have beheld the unflinching fortitude, and calm Christian trust, that is often manifested in the midst of poverty and severe physical suffering;—they would have realized that all outward possessions are of little value, compared to the principles of our religion, and that those possessions should always be liberally employed in disseminating those principles. “If the supporters of this Ministry, (they might

exclaim,) could only stand with me here, they would feel that the most enthusiastic language that has ever been used respecting its importance, could hardly be termed exaggeration."

To this part of the duties of a minister at large, I would particularly refer; it is one which, cannot generally meet the eye, yet should never be forgotten. It is humble and unobtrusive; but, as sure as there is any truth in the doctrines of the New Testament, it is important beyond description.

If the good accomplished by this Ministry were only to the sick and the dying, it would amply compensate for all its labors; but in ministering to these, many others are likewise benefited. Where can a parent's heart be so impressed, as at the death-bed of a child? Where can a child be so won to virtue as at the last interview with a parent? Where can a husband's mind be so stirred as when he sees his companion passing to another world? Kindness manifested at such hours is never forgotten. Christian counsel here given is long remembered. And hence a minister among the Poor may exercise in such scenes an influence which shall be felt in eternity. During the past year, I have offered prayers at twenty-three funerals, have attended upon many who have recovered from dangerous sickness, and now visit, weekly and daily, many who linger under slow disease.

Among those visited, there are also many who are afflicted, not by sickness, but other trials, and who often need immediate relief. By the liberality of friends I have been enabled to administer to such necessities.* Extreme care has been used in bestowing aid; indeed I have never given without such investigation as to satisfy

* It may be proper to state that no fund from the Churches is appropriated to the Poor's purse. That for the relief of temporal suffering the Ministers at Large depend wholly upon voluntary contributions. Any money, therefore, or any articles which may relieve the needy, will be gratefully received and devoted to the good of others.

my mind that it was for the best. In this way I have distributed, during the past year, two hundred and sixty-five dollars. Such relief is absolutely essential, and the office of minister at large would be insufferable without it. The visitor among the Poor sees cases of actual suffering, where spiritual counsel, without temporal aid, would be a mockery. Still such aid should be administered with great caution and judgment, otherwise it will do far more harm than good. The minister at large, by frequent visits, (both to the individuals and the neighborhoods in which they live,) is able to become acquainted with the merits of such cases as come under his observation, and to detect impositions which might otherwise pass undiscovered. And here one may easily see the advantages of our Ministry, if it is worthily carried out. In addition to the two hundred and sixty-five dollars, I have given forty feet of wood, groceries, shoes, and many articles of clothing, which have been placed in my hands by generous friends.

It was my purpose at the commencement of the season, to have visited occasionally our Prison, Houses of Correction, Reformation, Farm School, &c.; but this, though important, I have not been able to do, as I could have wished, on account of other duties. The sick at the Hospital, I have frequently been called to visit, and the admirable arrangement, and almost perfect order of that noble institution is too well known to need any remark.

I have also in my duties visited the Jail, and here less can be said in way of commendation. The construction of the building is exceedingly bad, so that those who are confined in the cells can converse freely with each other. I have stood in the long entry-way, when the prisoners knew not that they were overheard, and have listened to such blasphemy and vulgarity as made my blood run cold. It should be remembered that one committee after another, in successive years, have reported to the city government in favor of a change. In 1836, a committee of which Samuel T. Armstrong was chairman, stated that "*economy, humanity, and morality, demand an alteration in the construction of the Boston Jail;*" and yet to

this day it is unaltered. Ought we to rest easy while such abuses remain?

At our chapel, we have a very full attendance, and a more attentive audience could hardly be found. During the warm season we have had but two services on Sunday, but through the remainder of the season we shall have a third service. Four hundred seats are assigned to persons who regularly occupy them. The remainder are left for those who, from Sunday to Sunday, may please to attend. Twelve have been baptized, and fourteen added to the church.

Every Friday evening, through the year, we have had a meeting in the Vestry, which has been well attended. These meetings are for the exposition of Scripture, &c.

In order to become better acquainted with the male members of the chapel, and to awaken a deeper interest among them, a number of meetings have been appointed for this purpose. On these occasions, there has first been a short address, after which the meeting has been thrown open for general conversation. Evenings spent in this way, have tended, in connection with other things, to draw into our chapel a greater proportion of men, and to bring about among them a more hearty co-operation.

There are multitudes in our city, who are almost ripe for any desperate work which may be suggested by reckless innovators and ultra radicals. Warm words would fall among them like firebrands. They are well-nigh ready to trample beneath their feet the most sacred rights of humanity; and yet these very men are willing to listen to better counsel, and, if rightly influenced, to perform worthily their duties in life, and remain true to that society of which they form a part. It is one of the great purposes of this Ministry to diffuse such an influence, and the good which may be exerted in this way, is by no means small.

On the first Tuesday of October, we shall commence our meetings for conversation and prayer. These meetings are held at private dwellings, and tend to awaken an individual interest which could not always be called out

in a more public assembly. They will be continued through the winter.

I mentioned in my last Report, that I hoped to hold meetings in the poorest and most abandoned parts of the city. During the short and warm evenings of the summer, this could not be conveniently done; but I have now given out word from the pulpit that I shall hold myself ready to go to any such place, where a room can be obtained. I have requested the people to look for rooms, that the gospel may be preached to those who will not or cannot attend church on the Sabbath.

The Sunday School is under the care of Mr. Cobb, who, with the teachers, takes the whole management. There are about three hundred scholars generally present, some of whom are quite advanced, and are formed into Bible Classes. At present, I meet the scholars on Wednesday afternoon, and give lectures on Natural History. These lectures will be continued through the next month, when they will give place to the Sewing School.

There have also been appropriate services for the children, on the first Sunday of every month.

Books have been given out from the Chapel Library, one evening of every week, and thus those of our number who have not the means of purchasing books, have been enabled to improve their minds, when the labors of the day were ended.

Other things might be mentioned, but enough has been said to show that the field is wide, and that there is ample encouragement for renewed exertions.

Before closing this Report, I would express sincere thanks to all who have placed it in my power to benefit others. And would only add that the experience of another year has more strongly confirmed my faith in the objects of this Ministry.

Very respectfully,

R. C. WATERSTON.

Boston, Sept. 29, 1840.

THE

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS, SCHOOL STREET.

1842.

R E P O R T .

IN presenting their Eighth Annual Report, the Committee desire gratefully to acknowledge that during another year, the favorable smiles of God's providence have continued to rest upon the Institution entrusted to their charge, and that its friends have not been wanting in affording the encouragement and support, needed for the successful prosecution of the important work it has undertaken to perform.

During the past year the current expenses of the Fraternity have been greater than any previous year, but the sum of the contributions of the several churches have been sufficient to meet these expenses, and to leave a balance of a few dollars in the treasury.

The Committee cannot but rejoice in this evidence of continued confidence and interest in the Ministry at Large ; and they are persuaded that they cannot more satisfactorily demonstrate that this confidence is rightfully reposed and this interest felt, or place the practical operations of this Ministry in a clearer light, than by permitting the Ministers at Large to speak for themselves. The Semi-Annual Reports of these gentlemen present the best ac-

count that can be given of what has been done and what is doing, through the instrumentality of this Institution, for the poor, the desolate, the sinful.

In his Semi-Annual Report for October last, Rev. Mr. Waterston thus speaks.

“ The labors of the Ministry at Large, during the past season, have been steadily carried forward. Its work is one of patient and laborious effort. It is one from which sudden and splendid results are hardly to be expected. Its consequences are to be summed up in eternity, rather than time, and by God rather than man.

During the lapse of a few months, it may be difficult to accomplish much which will seem of value when put in the form of statistics, and yet good influences may have been exerted which on individual minds will be felt forever.

The work of this ministry is two fold, *prevention and reform*. The whole that is done in the way of prevention is what can never be reported. The evil we prevent we never see. When a soul by appropriate counsels is kept from infidelity or licentiousness, no eye sees the sin which was possible, but which now will never be. If we can prevent souls from plunging into iniquity, it is better than to pluck them out as burnt brands afterwards. And yet, when this is done, whether in old or young, male or female, it is what from the very nature of the case can never be presented in the form of a Report. To this work of prevention this ministry is especially dedicated. Its best results come under this head, and I believe that during the past six months much has, in this way, been accomplished.

Another object of this ministry is *reform*, and even here

much may be done, while, at the same time, little is seen either romantic or marvellous. When a desperate wretch becomes a public benefactor it is a startling fact and attracts, perhaps, general notice, but when an humble laborer, turns from low desires and becomes a child of God, it will be unobtrusive and to some minds seem hardly worth the effort. If the afflicted and destitute are encouraged and put in the way of helping themselves, it may make little display upon paper, and yet be a work of true Christian charity and worthy our exertions. Very much is done, every month and week in this way, and much that is worth doing, and yet it would be difficult to bring it into the shape of definite statements. Much of the good accomplished by this ministry may be suggested, but it cannot be stated. If the field of its labor is faithfully accepted much must be done which can never be written.

The minister at large, when he has labored with the most diligence and done the most good, will feel that a few facts are as nothing to exemplify results. The silent influence which leads to steady progress and immortal hope cannot be shown. That quiet work, which is the best and most properly the object of our desire, with many will pass for naught.

During the past season, there have been three religious services every week, which have been well attended. There has been much interest manifested in religion, and our more private meetings have been full. There has been a feeling of uniform kindness manifested among the people for one another, indeed they seem as one family in the affection which binds them together. In cases of sickness and extreme poverty they aid one another, and are often willing, at much personal sacrifice, to watch by

the sick bed and render other assistance. There is as great a degree of fellowship as I have ever seen, and it has always been my desire to encourage this spirit of christian regard and affection.

Since January thirty-four have been admitted to the church, ten males and twenty-four females. In these cases there has been a decided change, a work of spiritual struggle which formed a new era in the life. All these have continued in their interest. The feeling which was strong at first, is strong now. There are at this time one hundred and eighteen who are members of the church; at our Friday evening vestry meetings about eighty are generally present, and on Sunday in the afternoon about five hundred.

I have commenced holding evening meetings in various parts of the city, at the houses of the poor, and those, who seldom or never attend church, are here invited and at times are induced to come. Some of these meetings have been very interesting, and I propose to hold such a meeting as often as once a week throughout the winter, and believe they will be productive of great good. We shall go to the houses of the sick and the destitute, to the abode of the virtuous poor, and the reformed inebriate. We shall endeavor, as far as may be, to hold meetings in various parts of the Western and Northern sections of the city, and draw in all whom we can.

The evils of intemperance are constantly before the Minister at Large. Its black and deadly woes, its sickening corruptions are ever before his eyes. A number who attend the chapel with which I am connected, have suffered so much by drinking husbands, that they have been compelled to separate themselves entirely. Some there are

who still suffer, and suffer what can hardly be described, and some within the last year have enjoyed the privilege of seeing their companions become regenerated men. Several now attend the chapel who a year ago were not seen in the house of God. They have thoroughly reformed, and have solemnly resolved that they will never again become the slaves of appetite. To see the new aspect of their homes is enough to reward one for years of labor. During the past six months more has been done in this city to reform the confirmed drunkard than ever before. Its effect has sunk deep and extended far. Many a desolate and half broken heart has been made happy. At the last public meeting of the Fraternity, a letter was read from the wife of a reformed drunkard. That man is still faithful to his resolve. He has now been so more than a year and a half. He is with us every Sunday, is an industrious workman, a happy father and kind husband, and the wealth of the city would not, as I believe, tempt him to go back. The influence of this Ministry is doing much to hasten and render permanent the Temperance reform, and a more important reform never was known.

The sewing school, (the object of which is to put it in the means of the destitute to gain an honest livelihood,) was given up as usual during the hot months, but was recommenced last week. The ladies who volunteer their services in this labor render a great service to the poor and to the Ministry.

The Sunday School has at this time forty-six Teachers (seventeen male and twenty-nine female.) There are upon the books the names of four hundred pupils connected with the school. There are at least three hundred and fifty in actual connection. There are two large

classes of more advanced age, from eighteen to thirty years of age, one under the care of the assistant Superintendent, and the other under that of a student from the Divinity School. Teachers' meetings are held once a month, and on the first Sunday of every month there is a service in the chapel particularly addressed to the young.

In distributing charity I have felt it my duty to use the greatest caution, and may at times have been over-scrupulous and have refrained from giving where to give would have been proper, but convinced of the evils flowing from indiscriminate charity, it has seemed a duty to be cautious. I have given in this way since January, in small sums, one hundred and eighty dollars, besides wood, clothing, &c. Much of this has been given to those who are particularly under my care, and never without personal knowledge of the persons aided.

I would express my sense of obligation to the ladies of the Tuckerman Circle and anonymous contributors, who placed this means of relief in my hands.

I have been able, through "the Book and Pamphlet Society" and some other sources, to distribute tracts among many families, and, if judiciously managed, much may in this way be done; particularly by the admirable tracts of our denomination. Strong minds which have been bewildered or displeased elsewhere, peruse our tracts with peculiar satisfaction. Some contain convincing arguments for clear intellects, and others sentiments of consolation for bereaved hearts, and both are received with a welcome.

Something has also been accomplished by our Chapel Library. This library was obtained by the contributions of liberal friends, and donations among those who attend

the chapel. There are five hundred well selected books, and they are given out every Friday evening. During the past year the number given out has been one thousand four hundred and thirty-one. The largest number in any month was in March, being one hundred and eighty-eight. In this way the domestic circle is made cheerful, and the poor laborer can pass in a rational manner his leisure hours. Children can read to their fathers and parents to children, and thus will the pleasures of home become more refined and elevated. The fact, that two of our young men have voluntarily given their time and labor in receiving and giving out the books, and that more than fourteen hundred times have books been called for and delivered, is a proof that the privilege has been appreciated and improved."

In his Report rendered the 1st of April, Mr. Waterston says :—

" Among the people for whom I labor, there has been an uncommon degree of interest manifested in the subject of religion. Under these influences I have not found it necessary to resort to any new methods of operation, but have been able to go steadily on in my accustomed course. Our meetings have been crowded, and I have sought to exercise constant vigilance to guide the feeling which has been awakened. We have, as usual, had three meetings each Sunday, and while giving a course of Lectures on the Formation of the Christian character I preached three times each Sunday for nine weeks; indeed, with the exception of four Sundays, (when brother clergymen preached for me,) I have preached three times every Sunday since last autumn. I have also given a Lecture in

the vestry every Friday, and superintended a meeting, open to remarks from others, on every Tuesday evening, I have also held a meeting on Wednesday evening, three weeks in each month, generally at my own house, and at which all were invited who wished to converse on the subject of personal religion.

This has taken up my evenings, while my days have been spent in visiting and in preparation for my Sabbath duties.

It may be proper to say that in the churches around us we have had to witness not a little party zeal; denunciations and lamentations have been poured forth. Committees have been appointed, and our people have been visited and entreated not to enter our chapel. They have been told that by so doing they were putting their souls in danger of eternal destruction. But under this our people have remained firm as a rock; indeed some, and not a few, who were met with the reply "come and see," — came, and had the candor to say that they had wholly misunderstood our views and our spirit, while some have even remained, and *now continue to worship with us.*

Since the 1st of January, forty-nine have been added to the church, fifteen males and thirty-four females.

I believe it may be truly said that the condition of the chapel, and of the more general labors of this Ministry, is such as to make it worthy of the sympathy and support of a christian community."

These extracts from Mr. Waterston's Semi-Annual Reports for October and April last, present a highly satisfactory exhibition of the condition and progress of the Ministry at Large, as connected with the Pitts-street Chapel.

Rev. Mr. Sargent in his Semi-Annual Report, for October, says "that the interests of our Ministry in the Southern section of the city, continue prosperous and progressive ; that the attendance upon the Suffolk Street Chapel steadily increases notwithstanding some unfavorable circumstances." He alludes particularly to the frequent changes of residence. After mentioning an illustration of this, the fact that within two years more than sixty families have removed either out of the city, or to such distant parts of it as to be beyond the bounds of his ministry, he says, "the inconvenience thus arising is not slight — new relations being thus continually forced upon the pastor, while the old are severed as fast as they begin to attain a spiritual interest. The present circle of my visits may be considered as circumscribed by about two hundred families ; of which one hundred and thirty-six are in regular connexion with the chapel."

Upon the readiness and disposition of those who attend upon the chapel, to contribute what they can toward defraying its expenses, Mr. Sargent speaks as follows :

"Experience testifies that the poor themselves are by no means behind any others, in contributing according to their means for the support of religious institutions. Previous to the month of January last, I had several times received the intimation that a number of families wished connection with the chapel, on condition that they might be allowed to pay something for the privilege. — Accordingly in the month of February we adopted, and have sustained ever since, the plan of monthly collections, which have averaged about sixteen dollars, the aggregate amount of which your treasurer has received.

There is a very natural, and may we not say, laudable

disinclination with many to avail of what is offered gratuitously, or comes to them too cheap. They prefer to pay something, be it ever so little, — nor can we doubt that the benediction bestowed upon ‘the widow’s mite,’ goes with all such free will offerings.

I have known the poor man, from his bed of sickness on Monday, tender me his sixpence, with a satisfaction which the owner or giver of millions might have envied, and also with the expression of a regret that he was not able to place it in the contribution box of the sanctuary the day before. — The bed of sickness! What an ordeal it is of the religious feelings. It is there, if no where else, that the rich as well as poor are made to feel that religion is worth paying for. How often, during the past year, have I stood, or sat, or knelt by the troubled and suffering spirits which it supported, and seen there the blessed influence and effect of your benevolence in the calm resignation of the dying or the penitence of the erring, who, but for the blessing of God on your efforts, might have died as they were living ‘without God.’ — Not to enter on particulars, let me encourage you by the general assurance that your purposes are prospering. Your charity has given comfort to many on a dying bed. And, then, the sufferings of the living poor! who shall speak of them, who has ever spoken of them, as they are, surrounded and beset by the hurtling passions and manifold temptations of a populous city, whose avenues and secret haunts of evil, more dreadful than the highways by the forest, are found so often ‘leading unto death.’ — Into these the influence of your Ministry must continue to penetrate as it has done, till poverty and sin shall be divorced.

As regards the particular items or details of my service

the past few months," he says, "I have officiated at twenty-five funerals; — have administered baptism thirteen times and have admitted twenty-two to the church.

The Sabbath School is in a prosperous condition, numbering at present two hundred and twenty children under the instruction of thirty teachers. The number of teachers you will observe is slightly diminished by removals and the same causes which act otherwise to our disadvantage here. — The average attendance in the School is one hundred and thirty. It will scarcely go much beyond that, till the South End is more settled.

In addition to regular teachers' meetings once a fortnight, I have held at my own house, on the alternate weeks, a general meeting, inviting all for scripture expositions. — These meetings have generally been well attended, producing animated and profitable discussions. Church meetings are held once a month, on Friday evenings at the chapel vestry, and a third service for Sunday evening will commence early in October. The sewing school for little girls and the sewing circle of ladies for supplying destitute children with clothing deserve a passing notice.

The former is held every Wednesday afternoon, under the direction of four or five young ladies who reside near the chapel. Unobtrusive in its operation, it is yet undeniably useful in its effects. The parents often speak to me with gratitude of its utility. As to the means of doing further good, or confirming that already effected, I can offer but a few suggestions."

After speaking of the good done by Lyceum Lectures, Temperance Lectures, and the distribution of tracts, Mr.

Sargent closes his Report with the following remarks on the subject of his "poor's purse," which we give in the hope that it may stir up the benevolent and induce them to remember him in their donations.

"In behalf of the 'Poor's purse,' let me say a single word in closing. While I thank the few who have ministered to its scanty resources, I am constrained to lament the limited means thereby afforded me of relieving the suffering I see. With the exception of the "Tuckerman Sewing Circle," whose donations average between thirty and forty dollars during the colder months, and whose charity is as persevering as their fruits are liberal, I have received but forty dollars the past year, so that in the summer my alternation is either to turn away the suffering applicants, or exhaust my own private resources. To the liberal friend who sends me yearly draughts on the wood wharf, as well as shoes from his stock in trade for the needy, I would repeat my acknowledgements, while I say to all others that any donations of books, clothing, or aught else promotive of temporal or spiritual comfort among the suffering, will be peculiarly acceptable in this quarter, distant as it may be called from the more central and abundant sources of sympathy. — A common complaint here in regard to the civil and secular concerns of the city, is, that the South End has always been neglected and overlooked. — Let us leave no ground for similar charges in regard to its religious and moral welfare, neither let it be the complaint of your ministers "who hath believed our Report."

In his Report rendered the first of April, Mr. Sargent says, "There is little to report in addition to my last. Every thing goes on with us as well as could

be expected, considering the peculiar trials of our location in a neighborhood comparatively sparse. — Although scarce a week passes without some addition of new families to our chapel, still the number of worshipers is not very sensibly increased, for the reason that similar separations take place with about the same frequency by the removal of families from the city, or to distant parts of it.

We have participated of course in the recent religious excitement. I might detail many interesting cases of religious impression, and of newly awakened concern on the part of those who receive the benefit of your ministry, but I have such an aversion to lay bare to public view any statement of personal facts, which may possibly reach the eyes or ears of those whom they concern, that I forbear. Some striking instances of moral conversion also have occurred, in consequence of the meetings held every Wednesday at our chapel vestry by a branch of the Washington Total Abstinence Society. We owe much to this society as our coadjutors in the work of reform. Our Sunday School, by the judicious and indefatigable efforts of the superintendent and teachers, continues prosperous. Our numbers are gradually on the increase, though affected somewhat of course by the same causes, which occasion the fluctuation of families." — Mr. Sargent then speaks in strong and emphatic terms of the difficulty he meets with, in procuring coadjutors in his work. We give his remarks upon this point, in the hope that they may reach the heart and conscience, and move some, to whatever sacrifices and efforts they must make, to aid him.

"Our Bible Class, I am grieved to say, has entirely fallen through in consequence of the difficulty of finding any gentleman to take charge of it, since the removals and

failure of those who once aided us in this way some months ago.— I have since urged and pleaded with many gentlemen, in other parts of the city, to undertake this important trust, but without effect. *The distance!* *The distance!* they exclaim by way of excuse.— And shall it be, that, on this account, the waste places of our Zion must continue to mourn, and not one little wave of comfort come up to our distant shore from your central fountains, which overflow with refreshing influences while so many angels are troubling the waters? — I cannot believe it.

I hear on all sides of the interest manifested in religion, and of the desire to do good, and all are asking not only ‘who will show us any good,’ but who will show us where we may go and do it, and when I show them — ‘*Oh, the distance!*’ I hear of young men coming from Cambridge to the neighboring churches, to co-operate in *their* Sabbath Schools, and why not as readily for the poor? — I enter my Sabbath School sometimes just before the appointed hour of service in the chapel, and there I see young lads around the door, unprovided for, waiting, as it were, for the manna to fall from heaven; and my heart sinks within me. — I would willingly take charge of their instruction every Sabbath myself if I could, but I find it utterly impossible. The three services every Sabbath through the fall and winter months, which I have carried on almost without any intermission, and the other meetings in the course of the week, which occur four evenings out of the six, and the daily visiting I am obliged to practise, quite exhaust my time and my energies. — I feel my health gradually declining under the stress of these anxieties; — yet I do no more than I ought to: — nay, not so much as I ought. — It is in vain to argue, on the score of

prudence, that we ought not to do too much. No man *can* do too much in this ministry. No one who enters it can help feeling that he has done little or nothing so long as, in prospect, he sees so much to be effected. — And who can hesitate to feel such a zeal in this cause, when they see how unreserved a confidence and how hearty a sympathy has been meted thus far to the Ministry at Large. I cannot believe that in any case, or for light reasons, that sympathy and confidence are likely to be withdrawn or diminished.”

The Committee trust that this earnest call of Mr. Sargent for aid, in his important and arduous work, will not be unheeded, and that some of those whose leisure gives them opportunity, and whose ability makes them competent to the work, will come forward to assist and encourage him.

The extracts which have now been presented, from the Semi-Annual Reports of the Ministers at Large, the Committee cannot but regard as sufficient to satisfy the most sceptical, of the usefulness and efficiency of this Ministry, of the good it has done and is doing, and of the zeal, fidelity and devotedness of those who labor in it. Let not this fidelity and devotedness on their part, be met by indifference or neglect on ours. While we have reason to rejoice that this Institution may now be regarded as one of the permanent charities of our city, let us not forget that it can be continued so only by the sustained efforts and liberal support of its friends. — While, as we look back on the past, and trace the progress and influence of this Ministry from the first solitary efforts of Dr. Tuckerman to the present time, we find much to gladden our

hearts, let it serve only to stimulate and quicken our zeal for the future. In England, at London, Liverpool, and Bristol, the city missions which took their origin and form from the movement in this city, are each flourishing and progressive. In our neighboring city of Providence, the two societies of our faith have established a Ministry at Large during the past year, at an annual expense equal to one half of ours. Those two societies have raised for this purpose the past year over sixteen hundred dollars. Surely the twelve societies, connected with the Benevolent Fraternity, can not regard it as burdensome to raise a little more than twice this sum annually. The Committee hope in some things to diminish the current expenses of the Fraternity this year. They cannot, however, nor do they wish to encourage the idea that a much less sum will be required. From forty to forty-five hundred dollars will be needed, and when it is considered that this Ministry is striking deeper and deeper into that portion of society, for which it is appointed, and bringing the power of divine and regenerating truth to bear upon the hearts and consciences of the reckless, intemperate, irreligious, and its supports and consolations to the afflicted and solitary, the Committee feel confident that the churches of our faith in this city will cheerfully and cordially do whatever is needed to sustain and uphold it.

Respectfully,

S. K. LOTHROP,

For the Committee.

THE
NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS, 2 SCHOOL STREET.
1843.



REPORT.

REVERENTLY acknowledging the divine goodness, that has hitherto blessed and prospered the work of our hands, the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches rejoice that they have another opportunity to present the claims, condition and prospects of the important institution they have in charge to the attention of the religious societies, whose organ and instrument they are.

The Committee deem that a place in the first rank of the benevolent and Christian enterprises of the day may be claimed for the ministry to the poor in this city, and, to show that this claim is just, to quicken the zeal, to encourage the efforts and perseverance of those who have heretofore sustained it, or whose aid in its behalf is desired, the Committee propose briefly to lay before you the past progress, the present condition, the future prospects and wants of this ministry; what has been done, what is now doing, what remains to be done, that this work may be steadily, permanently, and successfully prosecuted.

It is now nearly seventeen years since Dr. Tuckerman, on the 5th of November, 1826, commenced visiting in this city such families as he should find were not visited by any settled minister as a part of his flock, with a view to render them any and every service which could be looked for from a Christian pastor and friend. Having little knowledge at that time of this condition of society in our city, he had to feel his way gradually, and the work progressed slowly at first. At the end of three months, the 5th of February, 1827, he had discovered and visited but fifty families; at the end of the next three months the number increased to ninety, and at the end of the year he had visited, and had brought more or less under his moral care and religious influence, one hundred and seventy families. This was the germ of the institution, whose ninth anniversary we this evening celebrate. This was the beginning of a form of missionary enterprise and effort, which, could it, in the simplicity of its aim and action, become co-extensive with the cities of Christendom, would do much to dry up the fountains of sin and crime, and to hasten the universal reign of truth, purity and goodness. Dr. Tuckerman published Quarterly Reports, presenting the results of his labors and investigations, unfolding the moral condition and religious wants of thousands, and laying bare to the light the existence of a wilderness of moral desolation and neglect in the very heart of the city of the pilgrims. Public attention was aroused and interested. Dr. Tuckerman found sympathy and aid in the work, and was encouraged to enlarge the sphere and plan of his labors. A small upper room was procured, and those whom he had visited and counselled and comforted in the week were invited to

meet together for public worship and instruction, free of all expense to themselves. Larger accommodations were soon needed, and a small chapel was erected in Friend street, for free public worship; young men came forward to labor in this field of Christian effort, under the counsel and direction of its chief Apostle; and, under the aid, countenance and direction of the American Unitarian Association, this work was prosecuted for several years with increasing interest and success.

But as the sphere of its operations and influence enlarged, difficulties and embarrassments connected with this arrangement developed themselves. It was perceived that the ministry at large, or a ministry to the poor in the city of Boston, was a work by itself, not coming properly within the objects contemplated by the American Unitarian Association, and needing a more distinct and efficient organization for its permanent management and support. It was perceived that it devolved peculiarly and emphatically upon the churches of the city to take this work in charge, and to carry it forward in the spirit of Christian faith and love. A union of our churches for more efficient action and effort, in this behalf, was proposed in the spring of 1834, and in the autumn of that year the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches was organized, having for its exclusive object to provide for the moral and religious wants of the poor, through a ministry at large. Under this organization an additional interest was awakened in this work, an increase of moral and pecuniary power brought to its aid. Under its auspices and management three neat, commodious and durable Chapels have been erected. One of them, Rev. C. T. Barnard's chapel, in Warren street, disconnected with the Fraterni-

ty, held by Trustees, and conducted on a somewhat different plan, and employing in some respects different modes of operation, is yet, it is believed, zealously and successfully prosecuting the same great work. The other two, the Pitts street and Suffolk street Chapels, are the property of the Fraternity, and the ministries connected with them, conducted by the Rev. R. C. Waterston, and Rev. J. T. Sargent, are under the direction and support of this Association. These Chapels are the centres of its operations and its influences. In the erection of these Chapels, and in sustaining this ministry since its commencement in 1826, about sixty thousand dollars have been expended.

This is a brief recital of the beginning, growth and progress of the institution with which we are put in trust. It is a history honorable to the churches by whom the institution has been fostered and sustained. It is a history conclusively refuting the charge, that their faith is negative, cold, barren — a history furnishing another item to the mass of evidence, of which every denomination furnishes its share, going to prove the pleasant truth, that there may be different creeds but the same *spirit*, and that that spirit, the spirit of Jesus, the spirit of Christian faith and love, burning in the heart, will be active in promoting the glory of God and the salvation of men. This is the history of the outward growth and progress of this institution; but who shall describe its moral and spiritual results? Who shall tell the good it has done to thousands of hearts, the light and comfort, the hope and peace it has brought to many an humble abode, many a tempted and struggling soul? Who shall calculate and declare the effect it has had in checking infidelity, intem-

perance and crime, the relief, the temporal, and moral and eternal salvation it has brought to the *unfriended* and *unfortunate*,— those who “ get along very well without the institutions of religion, with idle or passionate Sabbaths and prayerless homes, until abject poverty, or sharp disease, or death entering the door,” made them awake to a sense of their helplessness, and to the “ awfulness of anguish without hope ? ” Who shall tell what a blessing it has been to the sick ; what a shield of protection it has held over children, exposed from their earliest years to an atmosphere of pollution and sin ; what a staff of support it has brought to the aged, cheering their hearts with the light and hope of Christian faith, as they go down from the dark and narrow abodes of poverty to the darker and narrower abodes of the grave ? These things cannot be told ; they cannot be set down in a table of statistics. They are registered only in the Lamb’s book of life, and can be known only in that solemn hour, when that great volume shall be unsealed.

Some idea of them however may be gained, and the present condition of this ministry, in its practical operations and moral and spiritual influences, may be learned from the following extracts from the Semi-annual Reports of the ministers at large, which, in justice to these faithful and devoted servants of Jesus, the Committee feel it their duty to lay before you.

Mr. Waterston, in his Semi-annual Report, rendered March 31, 1843, after alluding to the circumstance, that in our own city there is a more just recognition of the claims of the poor upon the more prosperous classes than

elsewhere, and that the happy result of such recognition is distinctly visible, says, —

“ In presenting a Report, there are some things which a sensitive mind must approach with reluctance. How can we bring before the public the fruits of a ministry which must be connected with private experiences, and the influence of religion upon the soul? I shrink from any over-statement. Nay, in many respects I shrink from any statement.

“ There has been so much cant and pretension respecting Christian effort and the conversion of souls, that I often wish I need not let my left hand know what my right hand doeth. If every minister of the Gospel were frequently called upon to give a public statement of his labors, this feeling would, I believe, be universally felt. On the part of a minister, frequent visits are indispensable, yet one feels that there is something almost mean in keeping a daily account of these, that they may be annually published to the world. Additions to the church are good, and yet one may question the propriety of making this a matter of notoriety. Religious meetings, both public and private, are essential; and yet the frequency of such meetings we may be reluctant frequently to repeat. Besides, there are connected with this, certain temptations. If the largest number of visits are considered as desirable, the minister may be tempted to think more of quantity than of quality: if the largest additions to the church are favorably noticed, the minister may be tempted to receive those who are unworthy, or resort to means of unreasonable excitement, in order to accomplish this end. I state these things, because they have often been

suggested to my mind, and because, on some accounts, I have wished that all that was desired of me was the expression, on my part, of an honest general conviction, and from time to time a statement of such facts as I might feel it proper and important to bring before the public.

“Still, with all this, I allow and feel the reasonableness, and perhaps positive necessity, of a more detailed report. Many Christian minds are interested in this labor, and are desirous to hear of its results. With this consideration the minister at large may lay aside private scruples, and state what under other circumstances he might never feel willing to do.

“I may say, then, that the past year has exhibited as ample fruits of success as any which have preceded. Meetings at the Chapel and my visits among the people have been as frequent, and have given as strong a proof of beneficial results. In the Chapel there have been two services every Sabbath, and during the winter there were generally three. A meeting has been held on every Tuesday evening, in the larger Vestry, at which have been present from one hundred and fifty to two hundred persons. At these meetings I have always presided, and after some leading remarks, others have been at liberty to speak. The remarks which have been made, have, perhaps, without a single exception, breathed a truly Christian and exalted spirit, and been marked by sincerity, modesty, and devotion. Not a few of the clergymen and lay-brethren of our denomination, who have been present, have expressed their great satisfaction at the unexceptionable spirit which has been manifested. On every Friday evening I have given a religious lecture or exposition of Scripture; these meetings I have labored to make

instructive and useful. They have been well attended, and have been looked forward to with interest by many. Meetings of a more social religious character have frequently been held at my house on Wednesday evening, which I believe have also been useful. Having of late discontinued our third religious service on Sunday, we have held meetings at the houses of individuals, which have been well attended.

“It may now not be improper to state, that there has been a continued and progressive interest in religion. Many have attained a clear knowledge of God, and of man’s duties and destiny. Many who were utterly indifferent to religion and virtue have been awakened to a new life. Their whole character has undergone a radical change. During the last year sixty-six were added to the church, twenty of whom were men. Fifteen more have been added since the first of January of the present year. I have little faith in mere numerical statements upon such a subject as this ; but when I have witnessed the marked change of character, which has taken place among the individuals to whom I have alluded, I feel that there is something here of an interesting and encouraging nature. If this step were considered one of mere form, it were indeed worthless ; but if it is any index of spiritual experience, or any aid to spiritual progress, it is not without its real value.

“The Sunday School is in a prosperous condition : there are fifty teachers, who for faithfulness can hardly be surpassed. Mr. Cobb, who has for the last thirteen years been its Superintendent, still devotes to it his time and strength, and to his modest worth and quiet perseverance the school owes much of its success. The names of

over four hundred children are on the books of the school, and over three hundred receive regular instruction, and several of the classes are adults; one large class being composed of men of from eighteen to forty years of age, most of whom are now members of the church. Several who have been pupils are now teachers in the school. On the first Sunday of each month I continue to devote one half of the Sabbath to a service for the young, in which they seem to take much interest, and for which the parents also have a high regard.

“ During the last season I made an arrangement, by which those connected with the Chapel, parents and children, were enabled to take an excursion into the country, a pleasure which many of them had not enjoyed for years. We visited Mount Auburn, where we walked in quiet order through the green pathways until we reached ‘Consecration Dell,’ where we united in singing and some interesting services. It added greatly to the interest of this visit, to remember that in this sacred place rested the ashes of one whose name will be ever remembered in connection with this ministry. It was a pleasant pilgrimage to his grave.

“ The Sewing School, which was established by Dr. Tuckerman in 1836, is still well sustained, and as widely useful as at any former period. The ladies, who generously devote their time to this work, are rendering an important service. Every Wednesday afternoon they have their cheerful pupils around them, teaching them in an art which will add to their convenience through life, and perhaps save some from vice, by giving them the means of an honest livelihood. While engaged in teaching the use of the needle, the faithful instructor often

imparts to young and eager listeners words of profitable counsel.

“Reading must ever be a great means of imparting instruction, and awakening the mind to a true sense of its duties. There are connected with the Chapel two Libraries, one belonging to the Sunday School, and the other to the Chapel, for the benefit of the worshippers. In the former are about eight hundred and twenty volumes. There are about six hundred and forty volumes in the Juvenile Library, and one hundred and eighty volumes in the Teacher’s Library, and over three thousand volumes are taken out in the course of a year. The books of the latter were contributed by kind friends, some of whom we have reason to thank for recent contributions; particularly one who has contributed the works of Dr. Follen, and has promised those of Dr. Channing. There are in this Library over five hundred and thirty volumes. During the last year the number of books taken out amounted to one thousand one hundred and fourteen, and during the last six months five hundred and seventy-one.

“The worshippers at the Chapel are ready to do all in their power to support the institutions of religion. In proportion to their means perhaps they do more than most others. At the monthly contributions they give what they are able, and when occasion offers they are willing to make personal sacrifice to contribute the more. During the last summer the Chapel needed repairs. Some of the gentlemen of the Fraternity alluded to the subject, and expressed a willingness to have all that was needed done. The worshippers heard of this, and instantly determined to do it themselves. They said it was

their duty to do all in their power, and more than one hundred dollars was promptly subscribed, though I know that many gave, who by so doing put themselves to great inconvenience. Still it was done with pleasure, and the whole Chapel was cleaned, colored and painted by the voluntary contribution of the people. Carpenters and painters gave their time. The Chapel was thus put into thorough repair, without the slightest expense to any out of the Chapel; and the whole movement was an evidence of practical interest delightful to witness.

“During the past winter there has been an unusual amount of suffering, owing to general financial embarrassments throughout the community. Work has been scarce and wages low. Many anxious for labor have found it impossible to obtain employment, and many, after toiling hard, have received but a scanty recompense. The winter also has been long and severe; thus there has been an unusual degree of painful poverty. Such a state of things might be expected to drive many to dissipation and despair. Many, in this and other cities, have probably thus fallen victims, through their own want of self-control; but it has been a source of satisfaction in my labors, to see the power of religion to impart resignation and cheerfulness in scenes of privation.

“I have been enabled, partly through the voluntary generosity of friends, and partly through the liberal aid of the ‘Tuckerman Circle’ to give relief to many worthy sufferers during the present winter. I have given always with earnest caution, and never where the result has not afterwards appeared beneficial. During the last three months I have given to the amount of one hundred and fifty dollars. With a portion of this, groceries have been

given, and with a portion rent has been paid and other needed assistance rendered. I have given wood to the amount of sixty-eight dollars — also articles of clothing, which have been sent to my care from various quarters. I might here speak of one who, for several winters past, has sent me a constant supply of shoes, — of the ‘Eliot Circle’ connected with Dr. Parkman’s Society, from which I have received both money and clothing, — and of the Principal of one of our Normal Schools, who this winter voluntarily sent me, for the relief of the poor, a letter enclosing the sum of fifty dollars. The Young Men’s Benevolent Society has also given me an additional means of relieving distress. We can hardly feel too deeply the need of caution in bestowing charity, but who can doubt that charity must be given? No one who witnesses the distressing poverty into which many are plunged, can for a moment question that those who are daily among the poor, must know many who require temporal relief as well as spiritual counsel.

“Mechanics, who have been comfortably situated in former years, have come to me destitute of wood and even of food; sickness had stripped them of all. I number among my flock, widowed mothers, who, with families to support, receive for their labor the most meagre compensation, such as could not possibly meet their necessary expenses. I have visited families where the mother has been for weeks disabled by sickness, while children were looking to her for support; and where the rain has beat through the dilapidated roof upon the bed and floor. We may feel for the neglected insane in our alms-houses, but we must not forget that there are places of misery within the limits of our own city, where there is misery

enough to make one shrink and shudder. My labors and visits are not confined to those who worship at the Chapel, and many scenes of distress have I been called to witness.

“Some who visit the Chapel remark upon the respectable appearance of the worshippers. It must be remembered that the Chapel is not the circumference of the minister’s labors. From sickness, age, and other causes, many of his flock are never in the fold. He is often called upon to visit those in sickness and distress, who were before unknown to him. In our Chapels the poor always feel that they have a home, a free seat, and a hearty welcome. Many who are poor are not paupers. They are industrious, frugal and neat. Their means are scanty, but their wants are few. With a careful economy they are able to obtain some humble luxuries, among which are appropriate apparel for the Lord’s day. There is among many such a just self-respect, and so true a regard for the house of God, as to make them somewhat sensitive on this point; and is it not one of the happy results of religion to refine the tastes, and lead to a love of neatness and order?

“There are some who are in comfortable circumstances who attend the Chapel. They contribute generously towards its support, and are earnest co-workers with the minister in his labors. Were they to leave the Chapel, the ministry would suffer absolute loss.

“Then there are a large number who live by their daily toil, and while they are in strength, manage with prudence to keep above want, and yet who by a short sickness, or some slight disappointment in business, would be stripped of their scanty earnings and plunged into distress.

For such persons should not the doors of our Chapels ever be open? With them the skeptic argues; around them temptations brood; and yet they are open to the influence of Christian friendship and the power of Christian truth.

“ May the blessing of God rest upon all our labors, and make them instrumental in advancing the interests of humanity and religion.

“ During the past winter, having had occasion to visit New York, I gave some attention to the condition of the poor in that city. Wretched indeed is the moral aspect of that people, where thousands are left to the contagious atmosphere of ignorance and vice. Never may we be doomed to see our city stained by similar corruptions, or any large portion of society, through our neglect, plunged into degradation and crime. Is it not reasonable to hope that our Christian efforts, perseveringly maintained, may exert a healing and elevating influence? ”

Mr. Sargent begins his Report, rendered 1st of April, 1842, by remarking that

“ Under the most favorable circumstances it will always be difficult to measure the real progress and effect of this ministry by any outward or visible signs. Many of its influences, indeed, its most *valuable* influences are applied, developed and felt during those private and precious interviews of the pastor with his people in their homes of sorrow, whose issues no eye can read, but His who seeth and who searcheth all. The number of those who attend at our Chapels, for example, is by no means a fair indication of the number on whom this ministry is regularly brought to bear from week to week. The

causes are various which prevent the attendance of many whom the pastor most frequently visits. Were a friend of this ministry to visit the southern Chapel during one of the colder Sabbaths of the winter months, and to estimate the circle of the pastor's influence, or the size of his flock by the congregation he there sees at such a season, he would greatly err. It is well known, I presume, that the congregation there regularly falls away nearly one half during that season, seldom averaging more than two hundred and sixty or seventy, and as regularly becoming reinforced in the summer season."

After speaking of the inconvenience they had suffered from inadequate and unsuitable provision made for warming the Chapel, and the measures taken to remedy the evil which have happily proved successful, he proceeds to say, —

"In the midst of all this, our Sunday School, I rejoice to say, has retained its prosperity and strength. The numbers in connection with it have increased, though the average attendance is much the same in the winter. It is due to the teachers to say that their fidelity is unabated, and the Superintendent continues, by his Christian wisdom, persevering zeal, and kind affections, to win the respect of all. To these kind friends and helpers, whose ready sympathy has so often cheered and sustained me, I extend again the warmest expression of my gratitude. May they have the reward of their labors in the blessing of God. I might relate many evidences of their interest in the Chapel, and among others the fact that more than seventy dollars was raised about two months ago, in aid of the Chapel, by the choir and its efficient leader, who

neither receives nor asks any compensation for his services. Teachers' meetings are held, as usual, once a fortnight at the homes of the teachers in rotation. I always attend these meetings, unless prevented by ill health, and am happy to bear witness to the continued interest of all concerned in them.

“Our Thursday evening meetings, once a week at different houses, are also productive of good, the time of two or three hours on these occasions being occupied by religious conversation, prayer and exposition. The ‘Suffolk Lyceum,’ composed principally of young men connected with the Chapel, hold their meetings every week on Monday evening in the Vestry, for debates, lectures, and declamation alternately. This association needs encouragement. Will not our friends sustain them by donations of books to their library? There is an increasing desire for profitable reading in this quarter,—a wish to know more of truth, and to cultivate especially the intellectual and religious life. Shall not this desire be met by the contribution of volumes, sermons and tracts from such as have to spare? I have, indeed, been enabled, partially, to supply this want out of my own library, and by drawing on the liberal stores of the ‘Book and Pamphlet Society;’ yet I have often wished we might have a regular series of useful tracts for circulation.

“I have spoken, in previous Reports, of the incessant fluctuation of the families in this part of the city by removals. But this evil is happily counterbalanced by the influence and impressions which, in many cases, the persons so removing carry with them. I have several letters from persons now in the country, and formerly connected with the Chapel in Suffolk street, detailing their happy

experience while with us, and the comfort they enjoy under their present faith. I will give but a brief extract from one received last month from a young lady in New Hampshire, formerly one of our Sunday School teachers, and also a member of the Church. After some allusion to her present position, she says, 'You will not doubt I have often sighed for that spot where I first heard the truth as it is in Jesus proclaimed to the sinful and sorrowing of earth's children.' 'From my infancy,' she continues, 'I was blest with pious parents, who early told me the story of the cross as they understood it. But I could not comprehend the mystery with which it was clothed, though it affected my young heart.' In this state of mind she came to Boston, and resided near the Chapel. She then says, 'The morning after we moved was the Sabbath. I was looking out of the window, not knowing where to worship, when I saw two men carrying a coffin to the hall where you then held your service. I went in, and while life lasts, through eternity that day will be remembered. From that day do I date the commencement of my spiritual life. You will remember the day, when I tell you it was the funeral of W. C., a young lad, one of the Sabbath School, who was suddenly killed by an accident. The sermon is graven on my heart, e'en now as fresh as if it were but yesterday. I went home with feelings very different from those which had before filled my breast. I told my sister that I had never heard the like before. I had found what I had long been seeking; I felt that I had been directed by God. Since I made a profession of my faith with you, I have been called to part with dear friends, have been brought low by sickness, and yet more severely tried by ill treatment,

quite unlike the spirit of Christianity, from those I have ever loved. Yet never, for a moment, has my faith failed me. I have felt happy in affliction, — in view of death peaceful, — and were all the world offered me in exchange for it, I would not part with it ? ”

From the foregoing extracts from the Reports of the ministers at large, the moral condition and results of this ministry may be partially estimated. Your Committee cannot but regard these Reports as highly satisfactory. They furnish gratifying evidence of the zeal and ability with which this work is prosecuted, and of the good it is quietly and noiselessly effecting.

But there is a reverse side to this picture, which the Committee, however unpleasant the task, feel constrained to lay before you. There is another aspect of the condition and wants of this ministry, which we must look at, and determine how it shall be met. On the 1st day of April, 1843, we had in the Treasury, \$158,61 to meet \$1514,00. It appears from the Treasurer's Report that should we receive from the Societies, not branches of the Fraternity, which have hitherto generously aided in this work, the sums we anticipate from them, there would still be a deficit in the Treasury of \$764, in relation to the current expenses of the year. In this emergency your Committee ask for instructions. Shall they say to the ministers at large, that they can no longer pay their salaries or employ their services? Shall they shut up and dispose of their Chapels, and let their great work cease, and suffer poverty, ignorance and wretchedness, degradation and sin, to remain unvisited by and unchecked by the regenerating influences of Christian truth and im-

mortal hope. Forbid it love, gratitude, faith! Forbid it every Christian thought and feeling of our hearts! The Committee are aware that other causes than a want of interest in this ministry may have tended to produce this diminution in the contributions. The embarrassments of the times, a long and severe winter, a failure of employment to the industrious, and a failure of income to the competent: these things have at the same time increased the calls of charity, and diminished the power to supply them. Making every allowance for considerations of this character, the Committee feel constrained to think, that a want of interest, or rather a want of attention to its necessities and to its importance, is yet the main cause of the position in which it is placed at the close of the year. The plan upon which the Fraternity was organized does not operate so effectually as it was supposed it would, to keep alive and make active this interest. This organization contemplates the presence of five delegates from each of the Branches, at any quarterly and other meeting of the Central Board, who shall become thoroughly acquainted with the condition, wants and operations of this ministry, and be the constant organs of communicating knowledge and awakening interest upon these points to the Branches. But these delegates are rarely present; their average attendance at the Central Board does not amount to one half the number, so that many of the Branches are in a great measure left from one annual Report to another, in ignorance of the condition and wants of the institution they are to a certain extent pledged to sustain and advance. The first thing, therefore, that is needed for the further and successful prosecution of this work, is to have the theory of our organization more thoroughly developed and applied in practice. Let those who accept the office of

delegate feel that they assume an office of responsible trust in the management of a great public charity, in relation to which they are bound to be interested and sedulously active in promoting its efficiency, and in awakening an interest and communicating a knowledge of its condition and wants in and to Branches which they represent. Let this be done, and, through fidelity on the part of the delegates, let this interest be kept active and this knowledge communicated to the Branches, and your Committee feel satisfied there will be no difficulty in obtaining for this ministry all that it needs and is disposed to ask. What does it need? It needs first to be entirely relieved from debt, both its present temporary embarrassment in the current expenses of the last year, and its permanent debt resting upon Pitts street Chapel. The last is not a matter of immediate and pressing necessity, yet the sooner it can be done, the better. It would add much to the efficiency of the Fraternity, and to the ease and freedom of your Committee, in their future plans for the conduct of this ministry, if the debt on Pitts street Chapel could be entirely wiped off, and that Chapel be held by the Fraternity unincumbered. For this purpose some \$5000 are needed in case the Friend street Chapel is sold and appropriated to this purpose, and some \$8000 in case the Friend street Chapel is retained, which in some respects it is desirable should be retained. It then needs some \$4000 annually, in order to prosecute the work, with the efficient means and instruments which its importance and the growth of our city demands. We have but two missionaries in this field,— we need to have three or four or five. We do not need, it is not necessary, nor would it be expedient, to have more *Chapels*; but we do need more missionaries; we want more ministers to aid

and co-operate with those already employed,— that there may be more visiting and preaching from house to house, that they may go about continually among the poor in their dwellings, be with them daily in their temptations, search out the solitary, the outcast, the forsaken, the degraded, and bring the power of divine and regenerating truth to bear upon their hearts and consciences, and lift them out of the abyss of sin and suffering, and place them erect upon the rock of truth, and inspire them with a living faith. Your Committee have long felt the need of this. The ministers at large themselves have felt it. The growth of our city, now numbering over thirty thousand more than when this ministry was started, and its increasing growth, show it to be reasonable. But the embarrassments under which they have labored, in regard to funds, have prevented your Committee from carrying forward this work in the way in which they feel it ought to be carried forward.

This is what is needed for the present wants and further progress of the work we have in charge. Will not this community, will not these associated churches, rich in the temporal and spiritual gifts of God's providence, come forward and supply this need? Shall the poor cry to them in vain? Your Committee will not believe that they present this matter to cold and insensible hearts, or that the churches, whose agents they are, will fail of what Christian faith and charity demand,— of what patriotism and piety alike conspire to urge upon them. And in this conviction they respectfully submit the foregoing Report.

S. K. LOTHROP,

For the Committee.



THE
TENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.



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R E P O R T .

THE tenth year of the existence of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, has been one prosperous and useful, as respects the operations of the ministry under its charge, and honorable and gratifying in the testimonials it has received of continued public confidence, and increasing public regard. The Executive Committee, in presenting their Tenth Annual Report, would allude, first, to the plan proposed and adopted at the commencement of the year in April last, for bringing the delegates from the several societies composing the Fraternity into closer connection with the Chapels, and giving them more personal knowledge of the operations and practical results of the ministry at large, as conducted at these Chapels.

The want of this has been long felt by the Executive Committee to be the great defect in the practical working of our organization. Although every delegate, from every Branch, was morally charged with the duty of inspection and supervision, yet, unless he happened to be called to a seat in the Executive Committee, he had no special duty leading him to the Chapels, and by personal observation

of their usefulness, increasing his interest in their support and perpetuation. To remedy this defect, to give every delegate the opportunity, and make it his duty to become personally and thoroughly acquainted with the practical operation of the ministry at large, in all its departments, and thereby increase his interest in this work, and secure to its management that fidelity and prudence which its best interests demands, one of the Executive Committee, at the first Quarterly Meeting, submitted a plan, by which the delegates from each Branch were constituted a visiting committee for one month, charged with the duty of visiting personally one Chapel and Sunday School on each Sunday in the month, observing their operation, examining their condition, inquiring minutely into all their concerns, acquainting themselves with all their results and influences, so far as they could gather them, and presenting the fruit of their observations and visits in a report to the Fraternity at its quarterly meetings. This plan was adopted, has been faithfully executed, and accompanied with the beneficial consequences that were anticipated. Never has the average attendance at the quarterly meetings of the delegates been so large as during the past year ; never has a greater degree of personal interest been manifested, or a greater amount of personal knowledge of the condition and practical results of the ministry at large, been attained, than by those who have been your representatives and agents in this charity for the past year. The monthly reports of these visiting committees, while they have embodied much interesting information, and contained often wise and prudent suggestions, have afforded gratifying evidence of the unwearied fidelity of our ministers at large, and of the

beneficial influences which flow from our Chapels, the Sunday Schools, sewing circles, church meetings, conferences, and all the various modes of operation connected with them. In short, the reciprocal influence of this plan both upon the Chapels and the delegates, has been all that the advocates of the measure anticipated. The sympathy and interest thus manifested on the part of their friends has had a favorable effect upon the ministers and Sunday School teachers, and upon the worshippers and pupils at the Chapels. It has given assurance to the one, that their labors are better understood and more justly appreciated; and to the other, that their interests, their improvement, virtue and happiness, were sympathised in and cared for beyond the circle of those who immediately minister to them, — while every delegate will acknowledge the increased interest, the more thorough knowledge, the benefit and pleasure that have accrued to himself from the discharge of his duty on these monthly visiting committees. In this way and upon this plan, as there is more or less change in the delegation from the churches each year, a larger and yet larger number of persons will become thoroughly acquainted with the operations and beneficial results of this charity, and thus the public interest and confidence in it be continually increased and preserved.

The Committee cannot but regard it as a fortunate circumstance that this plan was adopted and has been prosecuted during the past year, inasmuch as it is well known, that opinions somewhat unfavorable to the Chapels, as parts of a ministry to the poor, have been entertained by some minds and expressed in some public journals. It has been thought and said that they were deviations

from the original plan, not parts of the first conception and design of the ministry at large, and calculated to interfere with that design, to prevent sufficient attention being given to visiting from house to house, and the searching out of the poor and destitute, the morally abandoned and profligate, the irreligious, the forsaken and neglected, in the miserable abodes of poverty, and sin, wherein they hide and lurk. The sincerity, both of conviction and purpose, on the part of those who have entertained and expressed this opinion, is not to be questioned. It is always well, also, for the managers of a great public charity to be watched, and to be kept on the watch themselves, that they may guard against the evils and abuses, that may gradually and unawares creep in and pervert, or injure the best and holiest work. Your Committee are persuaded, therefore, that good rather than evil has resulted from the extent to which public attention has been directed to this subject during the past year; nor do they deem it necessary to enter at any length into the discussion of it in this Report. It must and will, in fact, it has been admitted, that the idea of Chapels, of gathering the poor together for purposes of religious worship, of subjecting them to the influences of religious institutions, of holy time and holy place, that this idea is coeval with the very beginnings of the ministry at large in this city. It was presented in the earliest reports and writings of Dr. Tuckerman. The importance and necessity of the Chapels to the successful prosecution of this ministry was a point upon which his judgment was early convinced, and that conviction was strengthened by every additional year's experience. Their erection was an object dear to his heart. It had his prayers, his efforts and

his influence. Their completion and dedication, their use and improvement to the great purposes of this ministry, was a thought that brought a fulness of joy and satisfaction to his heart, amid the pain and weakness of disease, and in the hour of death. These Chapels are the legitimate fruit of this ministry, as its conception lay in the mind of Dr. Tuckerman, and has been developed and established through his agency, and that of others.

But this question is not the important one for us to consider at the present day. Whether these Chapels are a departure from, or a carrying out of the original conception and plan of the ministry, is a matter of small moment in itself. The great question is, is the plan as it has been carried out, whether a deviation or not from the original design, a good and successful one? Do the Chapels contribute to the efficiency of the ministers at large, and could they accomplish any very great and desirable results without them? Are they not means and instruments in their hands without which they would be comparatively impotent? Are they not centres of influence, from which radiance is extending continually, to a wider and yet wider circumference, fountains of living waters, from which flow streams that refresh and purify and invigorate multitudes of hearts? And were the ministers at large without these fountains, to which they could bid the people come, drink, buy without money and without price, would not all their visiting, and all their preaching from house to house, be comparatively without aim and without effect? Your Committee are of opinion that the more calmly and the more thoroughly this question is examined, the more decidedly and strongly it will be answered in favor of the Chapels. Undoubt-

edly wisdom and caution and prudence are to be exercised here, as in the management of all public institutions. Care is to be taken that these Chapels are kept, as strictly as possible, within their appropriate uses and purpose, as Chapels for the poor, and that the services connected with them do not assume an undue prominence, and throw visiting and the other instrumentalities of this ministry into the shade. Your Committee are happy to believe and declare, that this care is continually and faithfully exercised. In consequence of the discussion upon this point, which had been had in the public journals, and with a view of sustaining and encouraging the minister at large, as well as of obtaining more distinct knowledge of their opinions, your Committee some months since addressed to them a letter, setting forth in full the conception entertained by us as to the great scope and purpose of this ministry, the best modes of conducting it, the connection and relative importance of visiting, and the Chapel ministrations, &c. &c. Your Committee are gratified in being able to say, that the answers to this letter gave evidence of an entire coincidence and agreement of opinion between them and the ministers at large, in this respect, and justified the confidence reposed in their wisdom and prudence as well as in their devotedness and fidelity.

These matters, as well as the present condition and operations of the institution we have in charge, in its moral and religious aspect, may be better ascertained and estimated by the following passages from the last semi-annual Reports of the ministers at large, which the Committee ask leave to lay before you.—We deem it but just, both to the ministers themselves, as well as to the cause, to present nearly the whole of their reports.

REV. R. C. WATERSTON'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

Through the long and severe winter which has just closed, the various labors of the ministry connected with the Fraternity of Churches have been continued as usual. Each winter brings suffering and trial. Each winter is marked by its peculiar hardships and wants. Christianity has for centuries been gradually working its way, and gaining by slow degrees a footing in the world. Thus cities, which have been the abode of sin and sorrow, cannot, *without long struggles*, be redeemed from their debasement. Human nature is weak, particularly where it has been subjected to the most trying temptations, and when those temptations still continue around it. Those who labor in the ministry at large, labor for those who are surrounded by temptations. It is difficult to be religious in the midst of such evils, with a home which is perhaps uncomfortable, narrow, dark, damp and cheerless, and a thousand dazzling allurements on every side. The play-house, the dram-shop and the lighted saloon, profanity, profligacy and sabbath breaking,—all have their active influences, and they produce their effect. A man has toiled through the day, he returns from his labors to a home, where, perhaps, he finds crying children and a smoky house. He has found it difficult to obtain work, and when he has found it the compensation for his labor is small. The thought of poverty presses upon him. The fear of debt harasses his mind, and with dark shadows, like terrible phantoms hovering before him, surrounded by the allurements and evils to which we have alluded,—can we wonder if he should fall a victim to vice? A mother has a little family growing up about her. Her husband has perhaps been so intemperate that

she has been obliged to separate from him. She must feed and clothe her children by the fruit of her labor. She works early and late, and she works for those who are accumulating property by their business, yet her compensation is so small that she cannot earn the common comforts of life. Can we wonder if such a mother should become discontented and hopeless, and fly to that which is her worst foe. Such trials are around those for whom we labor. A strong tide runs against us. Can it be considered wonderful, if we should not be able at once to convert the whole city. The population of the city has increased rapidly. Excitements to vice have multiplied; while, within five years, sixteen thousand five hundred emigrants have landed at this port, — over three thousand three hundred every year. It is easy to speculate and wonder why this ministry may not reclaim all the wandering in a few months. It is an easy matter to sit by a cheerful fire-side, and converse upon the advantages, and privileges, and comforts of the poor. It is easy to pronounce judgment upon the erring and the fallen, and say, “they should be sent to the places of punishment they so richly deserve.” But, alas, when we know how hundreds and thousands of the poor are situated, we shall pity them with a profound sympathy. We shall honor them for being no worse than they are. And when we look upon those thus situated, shall we not desire to give them all the comforts and advantages in our power? To carry out the noble work of alleviating distress, of imparting advice, and reclaiming from sin, is the great object which the Ministers at Large would ever keep before them. In truth, they cannot do otherwise than keep it before them. It is pressed upon their attention by the occurrences of every day. The fearful realities of evil

glare out upon them in their familiar walks. If there is a *Gospel* ministry, there is also a *ministry of evil*. And there are many such ministers in the field. Considering the difficulties attending this labor, the temptations on every side, I think this ministry has accomplished a wonderful amount of good. God alone knoweth how much.

No one, who goes among the poor, can for a moment doubt the importance of constant *personal intercourse*. Where can the infirm be seen, but in their homes? Where can those who are prostrated by sickness receive counsel, but in the chamber of suffering? Where can the wicked be reclaimed, but in the midst of their daily temptations. It is *there* that the ties of personal sympathy must be strengthened. *There* will the most profitable words be often spoken, and the very services of the sabbath will be rendered more sacred by the intercourse of the week. Always have I been deeply impressed with the importance of this portion of the minister's duties. To aid the poor truly, they must be known, and while we would not undervalue the Chapel service, we are confident that even the exceeding advantages derived from the Chapels, are most intimately connected with the friendly intercourse which has been enjoyed in private, and the communion of mind with mind. With this view, I have sought, as far as was possible, to be *personally among the poor*; to know them at their homes; to hear from their own lips their tales of sorrow, and to witness with my own eyes their temptations and their hardships. I have been welcomed at their fire-side as a friend. I have seen instances of brutish degradation, and others of saintly virtue. At times my heart has sickened within me as I have witnessed human corruption and the madness of

human folly ; and at other times, I have been filled with admiration at the meek resignation, and heroic fortitude, and childlike trust in the tender mercies of God. At times I have felt that one could hardly pass through such labors without being contaminated ; and at other times, I have felt that such scenes might kindle the most indifferent to spiritual life and make the purest Christian yet more holy. I trust that, during the past year, I have grown wiser and better, by what I have witnessed, and I may also hope that I have scattered some good seed which may not be wholly lost.

I will not pause here to depict individual cases, for if I commenced, I should not know where to begin or where to end ; and besides, the homes I have visited have been private homes, their sorrows have been private sorrows, and if the deep workings of human hearts have been unfolded to me, it was not that they should be published to the world. Surely the messenger of the Gospel may be trusted in his ministrations, and it may be believed that he knows more than he tells.

But if there are wheels revolving in silence, there is also a dial-plate, and this must, in some measure at least, be an index by which to know of the movements within. One dial-plate of this ministry, is *daily life*. If you could lift the roof from a multitude of *homes*, if you could gaze in upon a *hundred work-shops*, you would see some proof of what has been done. Industry plies the needle and wields the hammer. Sobriety brings happiness and contentment. Integrity remains steadfast to the law of right. *Here is the grand index of our labors*, and we say truly, when we assert, that the hands on that dial-plate *have gone forward*.

The light of God's sun smiles upon more happy *homes*,

and upon more honest, industrious and virtuous *men*, from the fact that this ministry has existed.

There is yet *another index*, and that is the *Chapels*, where those who rejoice and suffer in a multitude of homes, and labor in separate spheres — are assembled as one family. Not that all the recipients of this ministry are connected with the Chapels. Far wider is the field of the minister's labor than that represented at the Chapels. There are many who from age and infirmity never enter the Chapels — and there are many of various religious views, who wish to receive visits of consolation and counsel, who but seldom frequent our places of worship. But there are enough of those who are benefited by this ministry, who attend the Chapels, to make *them an index*, in some measure, of what has been done. Here is a place of free religious instruction, where it is known that the truths of the Gospel of Jesus will be proclaimed, and its glorious promises held forth to all. On the Sabbath, when labor pauses from its task, the Chapel doors are thrown open, and between five and six hundred assemble. Some spiritual want brings them there. Some desire, — some hope, and out of the hundreds who come, not a few have received the principles of a higher life.

Who would regret that Christian benevolence has erected these simple, yet neat and comfortable Chapels, with their Sabbath Lectures, their Libraries, their Singing Schools and their Sunday Schools? During the winter I have attended at least five and often six religious services every week directly connected with my labors as a minister at large. Sometimes these services have been in the Chapel and sometimes at private houses.

If the exposition of Scripture is of any value, if the

unfolding of religious truth and exhortations to a truer life can be considered beneficial, then these meetings have effected good. That they have accomplished much, I believe that no one who knows any thing about them can doubt.

On every Tuesday evening we have had a meeting numbering about one hundred, which has been open to remarks from all. At these meetings I have always presided; they have been opened by prayer, by the reading of Scripture, and some introductory remarks, after which, all who might desire have been invited to speak. These meetings I have valued both on account of the good I have derived from them, and for the benefits I am sure they have conferred upon others. There the wayfaring man has spoken of the power of religion in such a manner as to awaken a more realizing sense of the beauty and glory of Christianity. In these meetings, as well as in my daily walks, I have often felt the force of the remarks made by Sir Walter Scott, in the preface to one of his volumes. "The poor," he says, "are less restrained by the habit of suppressing their feelings. I agree," he adds, "with my friend Wordsworth, that they seldom fail to express themselves in the strongest and most powerful language. The antique force and simplicity of their words, often tinged with the oriental eloquence of Scripture, in the mouths of those of an elevated understanding, gives pathos to their grief and dignity to their resentment." What is true of the Scottish peasantry is also true of many among ourselves. Some of the finest expressions of feeling, the most quiet breathings of filial devotion and outbursts of natural eloquence, it has ever been my privilege to hear, I have listened to at our humble vestry meetings and in the simple abodes of the poor.

On every Friday evening we have had a meeting, which has been attended by from eighty to one hundred persons. At these meetings I have taken up some passage of scripture, and offered from it such remarks as I thought might be useful.

The Library connected with the Chapel, containing over five hundred volumes, given by kind friends, has been of great service. During the year the number of times books have been taken out has amounted to one thousand three hundred and twenty-five. Many evenings have been thus passed in gaining information, instead of having been squandered in haunts of dissipation.

On every Wednesday afternoon the sewing school has been continued as on former winters. Over one hundred poor children have each week received instruction in the use of the needle. Great praise is due to those ladies who have given their time to this work of true benevolence. These teachers visit the children whom they instruct, and converse with or read to them during the afternoon upon which they meet. It is an interesting sight to see these intelligent minds, coming from the abodes of affluence, to contribute somewhat to the instruction and welfare of the less favored among us. There has also been a sewing school on Saturday at noon for classes of colored children, and thus some who have been as much neglected and degraded as any class amongst us, have received instruction which may aid them in after life. On Saturday afternoon between eighty and one hundred children have met in the *vestry to sing*, and the children have looked forward to these meetings with much interest. *In our Sunday school we have three hundred and sixty-eight pupils: one hundred and sixty-six male and two hundred and two female. One hundred*

and thirty-three have been admitted during the year. *Since 1831, twenty-five hundred and forty-one pupils have been recipients of its instructions.* There are at present *forty-seven Teachers*, namely twenty-four male and twenty-three female. Five of these teachers have been connected with the school thirteen years; one for twelve years; one ten years; one nine years; one eight years; two seven years; two six years; one five years; three four years; four three years—and so on.

There are fifty pupils in the school who are advanced in age. They are formed into Bible classes, and present one of the most interesting features of the school. Many of them are members of the Church. The fidelity of the superintendent (E. Cobb, Esq.) of the Howard Sunday School, is too well known to need even that tribute which I feel almost impelled to give. From the commencement of the school, seventeen years, he has been interested in its welfare, and for more than fourteen years has been its presiding genius; while every teacher feels bound to him by ties of affection and respect.

Connected with this school is a sewing circle, the purpose of which is to make garments for the poor connected with the school and otherwise to aid them. During the past season they have formed into visiting committees, and have made three hundred and four visits, and given to the poor one hundred and forty-five articles of clothing. During January and February they made seventy-four visits and gave away forty-four articles of clothing. The teachers of the Sabbath School make a large number of visits.

During the past winter we have formed a Temperance Society in connection with the Chapel. This society has been very active, and has done and is doing much good.

During the past year eighteen persons were added to the

church; and since January ten others; some of these have presented instances of a great change in the whole character, and all have made, I trust, a sincere self-consecration of themselves to Christ. To one who should know all the circumstances connected with what is covered by this statement, there would be much to interest. But a mere statement of a general fact is cold and meagre. Jesus gives us some idea of the importance which may be connected with such events, when he points from earth to heaven, and says, there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

The winter that has just passed has been one, as we all know, of extreme severity. More trying in some respects than any season for the last fifteen or twenty years. Among the poor there would have been much suffering, had it not been for the extreme vigilance of the benevolent. My poor's purse has been amply supplied, and I can hardly express the gratitude I feel for the marks of true Christian sympathy I have received through anonymous letters inclosing relief for the poor. I received through the winter generous donations where I had no clue by which to trace the name of the donor. Such true generosity will be rewarded in Heaven.

My attention has been particularly turned, for some time past, to the effect of alms-giving, and my views upon the dangers of indiscriminate charity and the best methods of bestowing charity, I have stated in a pamphlet just published, which has had a somewhat wide circulation through the community. In this pamphlet I have presented statistics upon the subject of *Pauperism* and *Crime* as they exist among us; and I have endeavored to present the causes of these evils and the best means of prevention.

It would be unnecessary to recapitulate the statements there presented, to dwell upon the evils therein set forth, or to allude to the means of prevention which I have there endeavored, at some length, truthfully to bring before the public mind. That Address, (delivered by request in the churches of three denominations in this city, and afterwards published by the invitation of the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism,) contains views and statements upon subjects intimately connected with the objects of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches; and I feel justified in referring to it here, both because it contains a full exposition of views upon principles which form a basis of action in the general labors of my ministry, and because, if that pamphlet proves anything, it proves the importance and necessity of such a ministry as that connected with the Benevolent Fraternity. Much may undoubtedly be expected from some of the excellent societies among us, but there is no institution in this country, or in any other, which can carry forward so efficiently as the ministry at large the diffusion of Christian truth and Christian love. And is it not, after all, to the diffusion of Gospel principles, that we must look for any permanent relief and absolute good.

This ministry of the Gospel of Jesus is exactly what is needed to diffuse new light into the popular mind, and to awaken a religious spirit in the popular heart. Its general ministrations, from house to house, the searching out of misery and vice in their hidden lairs, its messengers of consolation knocking at the very door of grief. What is carrying out the letter and the spirit of the Gospel if this is not? If we have not here that searching and renovating power, which will be blessed of God to the redemption of souls, where shall we look to find it?

If persons are often brought from a neglect of religion and its institutions, *to attend* the Chapels connected with this ministry, so they are often introduced *from* our Chapels *to the various churches* around. Many during the past year, by my advice and with my most hearty good wishes, have left our Chapel and connected themselves with other churches of our faith. They come in and worship with us at times, and feel bound to the Chapel by many pleasant associations and tender ties; but we have mutually felt that owing to circumstances it was better for them to unite with another church, and thus leave room for others. Thus, if we could, we would ever feed the churches, and send among them I trust those who would be faithful to the great principles of Religion, and aid in supporting the Ark of the Lord.

Much more might be said, but it is impossible to enter upon the various topics that suggest themselves as connected with this labor, without occupying more space than is proper. May a kind Providence impart wisdom to enable us to carry on this work so as best to promote the interests of his kingdom.

Respectfully,

R. C. WATERSTON.

Boston, April 3d, 1844.

REV. MR. SARGENT'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

IT is now nearly ten years since the organization of that Fraternity of Churches under whose auspices I became one of the ministers at large, nearly seven since I entered on the service, and about four since the dedication of Suffolk-street Chapel. Within these periods I have wit-

nessed and shared the operations of a ministry whose purposes are founded in the strictest wisdom, as they are sustained by the truest Christian philanthropy ; a ministry whose very cares and anxieties are richer than the world's enjoyments, and whose objects, while they engross all my time, are interwoven with all my habits and affections. So completely are its avocations identified with my daily life that I have learned to have no interest or pursuit apart from its absorbing calls. Though my connection with this ministry began somewhat later than that of others, it has seemed to me as if a century of useful experience had been crowded within those few short years. Each returning anniversary only finds my faith in this service stronger and stronger, and perhaps on no previous occasion have we had more reason for congratulation or encouragement than on the present. The Fraternity and its ministers may well look to the past with gratitude and to the future with hopeful assurance. Disencumbered of debt, your association now stands before the public a monument of consistent and persevering charity, appealing to the same sympathies which first originated and still sustain it. Perhaps a superficial observer of this ministry might inquire why the Fraternity has so restricted its operations as regards the number of its ministers in the service ?—why the number of ministers employed is not more proportioned to the increased demand of an increasing population ? — why, in short, the oft repeated suggestion of the late Dr. Tuckerman has not been availed of — that “ we ought to have at least four or five ministers in the field ? ” — why our means of action do not enlarge with the growth of our city ? In reply to all which it may be said, and should be remembered, that one legitimate effect of this ministry, even with its present limited agen-

cy, is to reduce, after a while, the number of poor by ameliorating their condition ; — secondly, that we are not alone in this work ; — that the various, so called, Orthodox denominations have their well organized city missions, quite as active as our own ; — and thirdly, that the influence and extent of lay action of late years in our regular congregations is such, and so extensive, as to take the place, in a measure, of a more extended ministry at large. The Fraternity, however, will hardly feel their own responsibilities abated much by these considerations. They are pledged to do more, or, at least “strengthen the things that remain,” by the very fact that they have done so much. They have, indeed, done much during the past year, and, having done so much, may well turn to their ministers and ask — “What have *you* done, gentlemen, to justify our past efforts or the pledge of further coöperation with you ?”

So far as relates to my own sphere of operations in this ministry I will now answer this question, confining my statements, of course, to the records and interests of the last six months, the previous ones having been already reported :

I confess, as I have seen the circle of my duties enlarging, and the number of calls upon my sympathy increasing from time to time in this ministry, I have felt as if my health must inevitably decline, as, in fact, it did for some months of the two first years after entering the Chapel, in consequence of unusual stress of care in three services on the Sabbath through the winter, in an exposed part of the city, with little assistance, and two or three meetings every week besides, with constant visiting. I soon found that I must remit some of these services if I would hold my strength, and have, therefore, the past

winter, dispensed with a third service on the Sabbath. Our other meetings have been conducted as usual with but few interruptions. One meeting in the vestry or elsewhere being held every Wednesday evening for religious conversation, prayer, and exposition, in which considerable interest has been manifested by those present ; meetings of the teachers also once a fortnight, and of the church monthly, with occasional gatherings at private rooms where the individuals of the family were too sick or aged to attend elsewhere. Mr. Winckley, the superintendent of our Bible class for older boys and girls, has also held weekly meetings of the class, which is a large one, on such afternoons of each week as he could spare from his studies or engagements in Cambridge. And here, let me say, that the spirit and zeal of this gentleman, together with his experience and partial connection with the ministry at large in Providence, would render him a valuable acquisition to the cause at some future time. He has been assisted, also, by Mr. William S. Farmer and Mr. John Rogers of Roxbury.

The Sunday School has about the same general attendance as before reported, and is in a prosperous condition, — quite as much so as at any former period, though we suffer somewhat by the want of suitable teachers and the frequent removals of families, an evil which I had several times before had occasion to lament. Mr. Lincoln, the superintendent, has shown the greatest fidelity in his arduous trust, and is universally beloved by the parents, teachers, and pupils in this part of the city. Circumstances, indeed, obliged him to reside ten miles or more out of the city all the past winter and fall, though he still retained his connection with the school and came to it faithfully every Sunday. What an example is this to those,

who, though resident in the city, decline coöperating with us on the plea of distance, or any other cause!

Our customary celebration of the Sunday School and dedication by appropriate services in the Chapel, took place on the first Sunday evening in February, when addresses of much interest were made by Rev. Mr. Harrington of Providence, Mr. Lincoln, and Mr. G. F. Thayer, to the parents, teachers, and children. More than six hundred were present, and the occasion, we have reason to believe, was one of no little edification to all concerned. I would mention also, in this connection, the interest taken, recently, by persons at the Chapel and their friends, to raise money by means of tea parties, levees, and sewing circles, by which means nearly two hundred dollars have been raised for our benefit, and the fixtures of the Chapel, organ, &c., entirely freed from debt. There are now two sewing circles connected with the Chapel, each of them active principally in furnishing clothes for the needy; one composed of the younger ladies, the other of their seniors, and though their means are limited, their spirit is truly laudable, and they accomplish some good.

A committee of visitation, also, chosen out of the congregation at large, some months ago, and consisting of six or seven persons of each sex, who have more leisure than the rest, have made it their duty to visit the sick and suffering, and report to the pastor such cases as might not so soon come to his knowledge in so wide a circle of parochial duty. I am greatly indebted to the kind efforts of these friends, as also, in the same way, to my friends, Messrs. Lincoln and Farmer. By these means the number of visits among the poor has averaged not less than twelve or sixteen per day, though my own

share in them during the more severe winter months may not have averaged more than one-third of that number.

Mr. Farmer commenced visiting with me as an assistant minister at large about the first of November last, and had the sanction, by express vote of your Committee, for a service of six months in that capacity. That term will expire in about a month from this time, and I can testify to the entire fidelity of Mr. Farmer in all the duties to which he has been called. Besides visiting with me constantly every day, he has also preached several times with great acceptance, has taken an interest in all our meetings and services at the Chapel, and voluntarily originated and conducted an evening school for boys, two evenings in the week, at which he gave them gratuitous instruction in writing, arithmetic, &c. This school was continued for more than two months, and is now given up only for want of his means to carry it on and in the purpose he has entertained of going West. I can truly say he has manifested the right spirit in all that relates to this ministry, has an aptness and a taste for the kind of visiting required, and my only fear has been, at times, whether his health is fully equal to the continued duties of the profession. In the letter of Rev. Mr. Clarke, by which he was introduced to me, he is spoken of as a "young man of deep and strong religious feelings and very fond of visiting, advising, comforting, and praying with the poor and afflicted." I have found him all this, and I doubt not as an assistant in the less laborious duties of the service he might do much good. The calls of this ministry now are for such expansion or organization as shall enable the ministers to extend their visits by a division of labor. I am fully of opinion that the *visiting* part of this ministry ought never to be neglected, and

for my own part I can say, it is more congenial with my disposition than any other. I feel more and more encouraged by all that I am called to witness of this ministry's effects in the hearts and homes of the suffering. There is scarcely a day of my life that I do not see much to convince me gladly of the influence it has in alleviating sorrow, in lessening want, enlightening the ignorant, comforting the afflicted, redeeming the erring, rescuing the abandoned. I might give many interesting details of cases, but am satisfied, from what I have heard of the effects of such details when they are known to the poor themselves as being published, that the practice is impolitic and injudicious. The inevitable consequence is to make the poor more reserved than they would otherwise be towards us, if they once suspect that we are going to make a printed story out of their sufferings and experience. They very naturally shrink from such a painful notoriety. If there is anything remarkable in the case it is almost sure to be noised about till it reaches the ears of those to whom it relates, — and if there is *not* anything remarkable in it, then it had better not be mentioned at all.

As to the outward and visible results of my ministry for the last six months, in regard to parochial statistics, &c. I have nothing very remarkable to communicate. I have admitted but ten to the church, have administered baptism eleven times, and attended twelve funerals.

It is now worthy of notice, perhaps, that, while the number of families in this part of the city is increasing, the number of *poor* families, who require the attention of this ministry, is not likely to increase in the same ratio. I do not know how far these indications of change in this

part of the city are to be regarded by us at present, nor how extensive and rapid these changes are likely to be, but it is thought by some that in course of time the poorest will be crowded out of their locations here. Such a change would not be more remarkable, perhaps, than what was witnessed some years ago in the upper part of New York. In a conversation with one of the overseers of the poor a few weeks since, he alluded to the fact, that the removals of the poor from this part of the city to the North End was greater this year than formerly. Certain it is that the growth of this section is beyond all former precedent, and a different class of dwellings is now going up from those usually occupied by the poor. This, indeed, might now be expected. The other parts of the city being mostly improved and occupied, this will now become the nucleus for speculation. Rents will rise, of course, and have risen in proportion as the change progresses, and, as a next consequence, probably, still more of the poorest families will recede from their position here. The question then might arise, how far does this affect, or, is it likely to affect, the character of the attendance at Suffolk-street Chapel. I can only say that in regard to numbers it continues much the same as it was six months ago, seldom exceeding two hundred and sixty or three hundred. It has not increased, nor, indeed, can it under present circumstances. Some of the friends of this ministry, as we know, have ever taken strong and exclusive ground with regard to the attendance of any at these Chapels except the very poorest, and from a pretty thorough investigation of this section of the city I am satisfied that all the poor not already connected with some religious society, or whose circumstances enable them to attend worship anywhere, are embraced

within the influences of this ministry, and are worshippers at the Chapel.

Still, there is a considerable class unprovided for, I incline to think. They are not very poor, nor yet are they rich, but they feel themselves excluded from the Chapel. According to the views and understood rules of the Fraternity, they cannot properly be embraced by this ministry, and, however much I may deem those rules and views erroneous in point of policy, I have felt bound to act in conformity with them, and have, frequently, both in private and from the pulpit, expressed my purpose of not encouraging the attendance of any but the poor. The effect of this is undoubtedly bad in several respects, for we thus not only lose the coöperation of such as might help us in the Sunday School and in other ways, but we ultimately widen the separation between the poor and the more prosperous. But this is no longer a question for me to argue; I only know that the position of the class referred to is becoming every day more and more peculiar, and if one object of this ministry is to think or provide for those who have no stated places of worship, we are bound to consider it.

And, now, as so much has been said at different times, respecting the probable worldly circumstances of those attending our Chapels, it may be well to report something more explicit on this head. There are connected with the Suffolk-street Chapel, and more or less in the habit of attending there, something like one hundred and six families.*

And now, gentlemen, in closing this Report, allow me

* Their occupations are as follows: — six housewrights, eight carpenters, two candle manufacturers, one book-binder, one school-master, one confectioner, two seamen, four grocers, five blacksmiths, one wheelright, four teamsters, two coopers, six machinists, three

to say that, in my humble opinion, nothing more is needed for this ministry but to extend its means of usefulness in some manner commensurate with the growth of the city. A minister at large might be well employed at South Boston, or at some eastern or northern point, at least as an intermediate auxiliary with the ministers already employed. Such an auxiliary might find enough to do. But on this subject it is sufficient to refer to the arguments of the last printed Report, where your secretary has spoken so eloquently and so well; especially on the last page of that Report.

With the renewal of my pledges and prayers for the success of this ministry, I submit this Report, and am,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN T. SARGENT.

Boston, March 31st, 1844.

Your Committee feel that it is not necessary for them to add a word to these Reports of the Ministers at Large. These are sufficient attestations to the usefulness and importance of the work in which they are engaged, and to the spirit and efficiency of those, whom we have sent forth with the messages of glad tidings to the poor, the forsaken, and the sorrowing.

The Committee ask your attention for a moment to the financial position of the Fraternity; and congratulate you and themselves on the favorable account they are enabled to present. We have now to come before you with a tale of failure and deficiency.—It will be recollected that at the last annual meeting, our Treasurer's ac-

curriers, one sign painter, sixteen laborers, four painters and glaziers, two masons, two tavern keepers, six who live in families, ten who work in piano-forte establishments, three shoemakers, two watchmen, six seamstresses, fifteen widows, and one portrait painter.

count showed us to be in arrears \$1100. At the first meeting of the delegates from the several branches held in April last, it was voted, that the interests of the Fraternity required that the sum of \$5500 should be raised in the several congregations connected therewith, in order that the current expenses of the coming year might be fully met, and its floating debt be fully extinguished; and the delegates pledged themselves, severally, to use their best efforts to obtain, each from the branch he represented, its share of this sum. This pledge has been redeemed; the necessary amount has been raised; the arrears have been paid; the current expenses have all been met; and there is a small balance of a few dollars in the Treasury.

But more than this has been done. The permanent debt, which has for some years rested upon the Fraternity, eating up between four and five hundred dollars of interest annually, has been paid; the mortgage on Pitts-street Chapel has been discharged; and the Fraternity now holds both of its Chapels, in trust for the free religious instruction of the poor, relieved of all incumbrance whatever. This gratifying result was thus effected. The Committee were enabled to make sale of the Friend-street Chapel, for the sum of \$2300. This reduced our debt to about \$5000. The ladies of the Church Green Branch, Rev. Alexander Young's Society, moved by a deep interest in the Fraternity, and a benevolent design to aid its cause, determined to hold a Fair in its behalf. A gentleman of that Society generously threw open his whole house for their accommodation for that purpose. Their friends and the community generally became interested in the movement, and the result was, that through their pastor they were enabled to place at the disposal of the Fraternity the sum of \$2250. This reduced our debt to about

\$2500. Under the impulse given by this donation from these ladies, and the interest excited by this movement, the Committee entrusted with the subject of the permanent debt, determined to make an effort to raise the additional sum needed by subscription. That effort was successful. The sum of \$2570 was subscribed — \$1700 of it in sums of \$100 each — \$450, in subscriptions of \$50 each, and the rest in smaller sums. These several sources placed at the disposal of the Fraternity over \$7000, a sum sufficient to discharge the mortgage upon Pitts-street Chapel. This has been done. The proper legal papers have been executed, and the Fraternity now holds that Chapel in trust for the holy purpose for which it was erected, free from all incumbrance; and in case, in the course of years and in consequence of changes produced by the growth and progress of the city, some other location should be desirable, the Fraternity has power to dispose of the present building and land thereto belonging, provided the proceeds of the sale thereof be devoted to the erection of one or more Chapels, both of which shall together afford equal or greater accommodation to parents and children of the poor of our city; and any further surplus may be devoted to the free religious instruction of the poor, in such way as the Fraternity may deem best. Under God, who ruleth over all and disposeth the hearts of his creatures to good deeds, we owe this gratifying result to the benevolent zeal of the ladies of Rev. Alexander Young's Church, and the impulse thus given to our efforts. To them and to all the friends who have generously aided us, we present in your behalf and our own, and in behalf of the poor whom they have blessed, our most grateful thanks.

We have now our Chapels as the marks and monu-

ments of the permanent establishment of this ministry in our city, as the centres of its influence and its labors. What we want now is more ministers—more missionaries in the field. We must have them. We shall be faithless to our duty—to the growth and growing wants of our city—to the fearful increase of the means and temptations to vice and sin that abound among us—to the will of God and the great law of Christian love,—faithless to all these, if we neglect or refuse the means by which they may be appointed—supported, and sent forth to visit every nook and corner of the city; to search out the hidden places of iniquity; to bring the regenerating and sanctifying, and comforting influence of the Gospel of Christianity to every care-worn, sin-worn, and world-weary heart that beats in the obscurest garret or cellar, solitary in its sorrow, reckless because uncared for in its depravity. Let the subscriptions be kept up to the same amount they have been at this year; let \$5500 be raised, and with no arrears to meet and no interest debt to pay as heretofore, your Committee would have it in their power to appoint one, perhaps two more ministers at large, to labor under the direction and in conjunction with those who have already obtained so much experience, and manifested so much fidelity. Cannot this be done? And if it can, ought it not to be done? And if it can be done, and ought to be done, will ye not do it? The Committee forbear to urge this point further, though it presses most strongly and deeply upon their own minds. They hope it will receive the attention of those who may speak to us this evening, and be so presented and pressed by them as to be accomplished.

The Committee intended to furnish you with some account of what is doing by others here, and in other

cities and other lands, in this same great cause. But time will not permit them to make any extended statements of this kind. There has been a growing interest among other denominations in this city in this work. The Episcopalians, especially, have given liberally to this object. We rejoice in this increased interest, and hail as fellow-laborers in a holy work all who will engage in it. There is enough for all to do. In Providence, Rev. Mr. Harrington, supported by our two churches in that city, has prosecuted his labors with eminent usefulness and success. And a deep interest continues to be felt there in this cause. In Baltimore, a city mission has been established by our friends, and the Rev. Mr. Dall, recently of the Theological School, Cambridge, has been employed there in this cause for more than a year. His Annual Report, made in January last, is a valuable and interesting document, giving evidence alike of his good judgment, his earnest purpose, and his faithful and devoted labors. Our accounts from England, go to show that the interest of our friends there in this work continues unabated, and their efforts in its behalf unrelaxed. Let us then be cheered and encouraged both by our own prosperity, and the zeal and success of others. Let us provoke one another to good works. As this institution was the first in the field, let it not be the last in the race. Let us not relax our efforts, or stay our hands. Let us persevere in the hope and for the purpose, that this city of our fathers may continue to be a city set on a hill, rich in all noble institutions, richer still in the virtue and intelligence, the moral and religious character of its inhabitants. All which is

Respectfully submitted, for the Committee,

S. K. LOTHROP, *Secretary.*

Boston, April 4th, 1844.

THE
FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES



BOSTON:
PRINTED BY ISAAC R. BUTTS.
1845.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT.

SUNDAY, JAN. 5, 1845.

THE Executive Committee beg leave to present the following Quarterly Report : —

The interests of the institution have been diligently studied, and though they have been exposed this quarter to a serious trial, yet the Committee have a good confidence that they have not been materially or greatly prejudiced. As will be seen by the items presented by the Treasurer, the finances thus far have been amply sufficient to meet the current expenses. A few of the branches having fallen short of their assigned quota, unless those that have not paid in their contributions endeavor to exceed or equal the amount appointed, the balance of the year may tell against the Treasury. There can be but little fear, however, of such a result. A few extra expenses have been incurred during the past quarter. Agreeably to a vote at the last meeting of the Board, the Reports then read of the Ministers at Large have been

published, and an extra number of the papers containing them were struck off for more general circulation. November 6th, a letter was received from Rev. Mr. Sargent desiring that the money appropriated by a vote of the Executive Committee, to the supply of his pulpit for a certain number of Sabbaths, and which had not already been so expended, amounting to twenty-five dollars, might be granted him to defray certain unusual expenses to which he had been subjected. At a meeting of the Committee, held November 7th, it was "*Voted*, That Mr. Sargent's request be complied with." It was also "*Voted*, That in consideration of the inconveniences and losses incurred by Mr. Sargent at the late fire in Dover Street, the Treasurer be authorized to present Mr. S. with a hundred dollars in addition to his regular salary."

During the past quarter an event has occurred of unusual interest, and which has already given rise to much discussion. We refer to the resignation of Mr. Sargent of his office as Minister at Large in connexion with the Fraternity. The circumstances relating to this event should be distinctly stated. On Sunday, November 17th, an exchange of pulpits took place between Mr. Sargent and Mr. Parker of West Roxbury. On account of the peculiar position which Mr. Parker sustains to the religious community, this exchange naturally caused much regret and pain to many friends of the Fraternity, who considered its best interests greatly jeopardized. The Executive Committee, learning the feeling which had been excited, and deeming it a matter in itself deserving their attention, held a meeting November 21st, at which, after much deliberation, it was determined that a communication should be addressed to the Ministers at Large, ex-

pressive of their views in relation to Mr. Parker, and of the grounds upon which his admittance to the pulpits of the Fraternity ought not to be desired. At a subsequent meeting, held November 22, the draft of such a communication was presented, and after a few slight amendments, was accepted and ordered to be sent. This course, for many reasons which seemed weighty to the Committee, presented itself to their thought as preferable to any verbal conferences. The communication was written in the freest and most candid spirit, the farthest removed from anything bordering upon dictation, or movement of heat or displeasure, or desire of controversy. It was not issued as an authoritative edict, from the seat of the directory, precluding all reply and demanding implicit submission, but simply as a friendly statement of the wishes and views of the Committee, fairly and reasonably set forth, and in a tone which, it was thought, would commend itself to the kind consideration of the Ministers. The following is a copy of the communication above referred to:—

“The agreement of the minister of Suffolk Street Chapel to make an exchange with the Rev. Theodore Parker, on the last Sabbath, considered in view of the sources whence the support of the Chapels is derived, and also in reference to the permanency and progressive usefulness of the ministry for the poor, has occupied the anxious attention of the Executive Committee, and after careful consideration, they have come unanimously to the conclusion, that no exchange of pulpits with Mr. Parker ought again to be assented to. The Committee have not kept out of sight Mr. Parker's position as an ordained

minister of an established religious society in the vicinity, nor his claim to respectful consideration as a man of learning and of irreproachable private life; nor, on the other hand, their own official position, in which relation only they appear in this matter. They are the executive functionaries of a Fraternity of Churches, all the pastors of which, and a vast proportion of their congregations, if not all, believe that the leading views of Mr. Parker are radically erroneous and subversive of the authority of scripture. These Churches apprehend that they are authorized by a legitimate construction of the Old and New Testament to believe, that our Almighty Father has been pleased to manifest himself in the great work of the redemption of mankind, by a miraculous interposition of his grace, in the person, character and life of Christ, and by the prophecies which preceded, and the miracles which attended and followed his presence on the earth. On the other hand, Mr. Parker appears to have gathered from the Scriptures no impressions of the kind, but to have been able to trace through the same periods of time, so much only of truth, as required the simple agency of nature in her common course to bring about, ascribing all appearances or pretensions besides to superstition or imposture.

“The doctrines of these Churches are so opposed to those of Mr. Parker as to be deemed irreconcilable, and to rest on a wholly different basis of assumed truth. It is not surprising therefore that they should have declined to invite Mr. Parker to their pulpits. And since his views have been distinctly avowed, in their whole length and breadth, he has never been called to officiate in any of them with but one exception.

“This same Fraternity of Churches associated themselves under this appellation, for the purpose, solely, of providing, by stated means, for the religious education of the poor, as a distinct class, and instituted the Ministry at Large to carry out their views. How then can it ever be thought consistent with the benevolent design of these Churches, to call Mr. Parker to officiate in the Chapels, when their pastors deem themselves unauthorized to admit him into their own pulpits? If they have fear of injury to their own flocks, shall they be supposed to entertain no dread of consequences to the poor from a like exposure? It cannot be.

“Whenever, therefore, either through the want of vigilance on the part of the Executive Committee, or a temporary absence of discretion on the part of a minister of one of the Chapels, Mr. Parker shall, as a teacher, gain access to the poor through the Chapels, we must believe that as an immediate consequence, the confidence of the Brethren of the Fraternity in the usefulness of this ministry will receive a shock, and that there will be reason to apprehend that the stream of a liberal bounty in many a pious and benevolent bosom, will be diverted into other channels, and our accustomed means of maintaining an institution hitherto so promising and so beneficent be seriously impaired, and perhaps fail altogether. Fears of the sort are at this very moment not without some grounds. For since it has gone abroad that Mr. Parker has been admitted to the pulpit in Suffolk Street Chapel, not a few of the best friends of the institution have expressed themselves much grieved; and judging of others by these, it seems but reasonable to conclude, that if Mr. Parker were again called to minister in one of our Chap-

els, a very general mistrust of the usefulness of this ministry would prevail.

“The general control of the ministrations of the Chapels rests, by the provisions of the Constitution, in the Executive Committee. With every disposition to leave to the ministers the regulation of their exchanges as their convenience may dictate, there is properly some limit to be put to this discretion; but the exceptions embrace only extreme cases, like that of Mr. Parker, which, taken in connexion with the course of the remarks above, is obviously a very proper exception. Under their responsibility, as derived from the Constitution, the Executive Committee will give assurances to the Fraternity, that that gentleman shall not again occupy the pulpit in either of the Chapels, until they are otherwise instructed by some higher authority. As to what is the duty of the Ministers at Large in this regard, it is obviously pointed out by what has been stated to be the duty of the Executive Committee; and familiar as are this Committee with the untiring labors and devotion of heart and life of the actual ministers, they cannot for a moment doubt the readiness of these gentlemen to coöperate hereafter with the Committee and with the Fraternity in any measures they may deem expedient, as bearing on the prosperity of the institution.

“In behalf of the Executive Committee.

J. I. T. COOLIDGE, *Sec'y.*”

Nov. 22d, 1844.

Before this document was sent, however, before any communication, verbal or written, had passed between the Committee and Mr. Sargent, or an intimation

of the action of the Committee could have been given, the following letter was received from him, November 23d, resigning his office:—

Boston, Nov. 23d, 1844.

*To the Executive Committee of the }
Fraternity of Churches. }*

GENTLEMEN:— Having understood, with much regret, and from good authority, that my recent exchange with Rev. Mr. Parker has given great offence to several friends of the Ministry at Large, and to yourselves among the rest, and that it is likely to aggravate feelings of disaffection already existing, and being unwilling that any action of mine should longer be the cause of embarrassment to this ministry, I respectfully resign my office.

I am prompted to this course, not only by the sense of duty to yourselves which I entertain under the circumstances, but by the earnest admonition of those friends to this ministry, who have thought and said that I ought no longer to continue this connexion, unless I am willing to pledge myself in this matter of exchanges. Such a pledge would be, as it seems to me, only embarrassing to all concerned, and might as well exclude the Orthodox and Universalist ministers with whom I have also exchanged.

If the community, or any considerable portion of it are really disposed to identify this action of mine with the Fraternity or their Committee, and thus place the Fraternity in the awkward predicament of seeming to countenance heretical views, then I am very much deceived, as I am very much disappointed; and, still further, if the Fraternity, or even a majority of that benevolent association entertain the deliberate opinion, that, by such pro-

ceeding of mine, the real and spiritual interests of this ministry are absolutely put in jeopardy, and therefore they will no longer support it, then I ought immediately to retire, and no longer, by remaining, seem to falsify the principles and position of that Fraternity while I cloud its prospects. No. I cannot, I ought not to remain under such circumstances, and, much as I regret that any act of mine should have wounded the feelings of those I respect, I fear that no promises for the future, (even though I could give any other than to do my best for the ministry) would ever restore either the ministry or myself to their favor. You may well suppose, Gentlemen, that I would not intentionally have done anything to cripple or prejudice the great cause to which, for seven years or more, I have given my time and strength, nor can I now perceive that the action so obnoxious in regard to Mr. Parker, has any very threatening aspect towards the real claims of this ministry. But there are those who think differently it seems, and to their wisdom I would fain defer. My only consolation is, under the displeasure of these friends, that I have acted from conscientious motives, though this consideration may not satisfy the wounded feelings which anticipate so many serious consequences from the act in question. I have, therefore, no alternative but to relieve both you and them and myself, by retiring from a position which has now become one of perplexity.

I respectfully ask, therefore, that my disconnection with the ministry may take effect on the first of January next, or as much sooner as your Committee may think best. I mention the first of January, so that meanwhile the Fraternity may have some time to make other arrange-

ments for Suffolk Street Chapel ; — and let me also assure you, Gentlemen, that, even after my retirement, so long as I may remain resident at the south end, this ministry shall be welcome to such gratuitous aid as I can render ; and, as it has ever had my patient efforts and affections, albeit through some indiscretions and obliquities, so it shall ever have, to my dying day, my earnest and heart-felt prayers.

With great respect I am yours, &c.

JOHN T. SARGENT.

The Executive Committee immediately met again, November 25th, at which it was “ *Voted*, That the communication already prepared be sent to the Ministers at Large, and that in connexion with it the Secretary send to Mr. Sargent the following vote, expressing the unwillingness of the Committee to receive his resignation, and their hope that he will withdraw it.”

“ *Voted*, That the Secretary, in addition to the copy of the paper directed to be sent to the Ministers at Large at the last meeting, make to Mr. Sargent the further communication : That on account of the uneasiness in the minds of some of the friends of the Ministry at Large, on learning that Mr. Parker had officiated at Suffolk Street Chapel the Sabbath before the last, a meeting of the Executive Committee was held on the 21st instant; and the subject fully discussed, and it was concluded that a paper should be drawn up expressive of the views of the Committee, and a copy sent to each of the Ministers ; and at an adjourned meeting on the 22d instant, a draft of such a document was submitted and adopted. That

the Committee cannot but hope that Mr. Sargent will, on perusing this paper, readily acquiesce in the views of the Committee, and be not unwilling to be guided by them, and that he will consent to withdraw his letter of resignation; well knowing that it must be far from desirable to the Committee that he should retire from a ministry, the duties of which he has so long discharged with distinguished credit to himself and advantage to the public. And especially after being assured that it would be a source of pain and deep regret that the particular cause to which his letter relates, should be the occasion of his separation from this good work."

To this the following reply was received from Mr. Sargent, reviewing the communication and renewing his resignation :

BOSTON, Nov. 29, 1844.

*To the Executive Committee of }
the Fraternity of Churches. }*

GENTLEMEN : — Your communications relative to my exchange with Mr. Parker, and the action you have had thereon, have only confirmed me in the feeling and resolution I expressed in a previous letter, that I ought now to retire from this ministry. It is plain from these communications, that the prejudice against me, in consequence of this act, is no mere temporary feeling, but a somewhat inexorable disaffection. The conviction is one from which I can no longer escape, that, were I now to remain in this ministry, it could only be by a continued collision with a serious and weighty prejudice, which I could hardly hope to overcome. The sympathy or as-

sistance I should henceforth receive would be but a matter of constraint and reservation, given grudgingly, in consequence of the past, and thus the soul of my occupation, so far as the hearty good will of my constituents is concerned, would seem to be enervated and eaten out.

There are some persons of so inflexible a prejudice, that they can never believe anything good of him who has once gone counter to their wil's, and with such men, it would seem, no act of the offender for the future can atone for the past. The reserve of such individuals would only be as the chilling influence of ice upon my heart. It is high time, therefore, that I should be no longer as a rock of offence in the way of such men's charity, but rather make way, soon, for some one else to come and heal the wounds which I have so unhappily made. I appreciate the great concern you seem to feel for the more faithful and wise discharge of this sacred trust,—“the Ministry at Large.” I would honor, as it deserves, that serious conviction of responsibility which you express in your letter, and I trust you will allow me to claim similar consideration for the motives which have ever influenced me, whether in the past or present. I am free to say, I have no more sympathy than yourselves, with many of the prominent and peculiar views of Mr. Parker, but I hold that, as liberal Christians, we stand in a somewhat peculiar position in this matter of Christian fellowship,—a position which, for the sake of consistency, we ought more fully to define, or maintain, or forsake. But I will not follow this argument any further now. Suffice it to say, your letter amounts to a solemn remonstrance against that position. I discern upon your letter, and through every line of it, the most fervent and Christian anxiety,

lest through my means, or any other, this ministry should experience default or failure; and, while I share this concern, and while I see and reverence this spirit in your letter, I hope you will allow me respectfully and seriously to consider some of its positions. It is there stated, that "all the pastors of those Churches forming 'the Fraternity,' and a vast proportion of their congregations, if not all, believe that the leading views of Mr. Parker are radically erroneous and subversive of the authority of Scripture." How happens it then, that so many in those congregations are so athirst to hear those very views, and that some one or more of those very *pastors* are said to hold views analogous or identical with these, though not publicly proclaimed, and that some stand ready to exchange with Mr. Parker at any time he pleases, while others, still, are *willing* so to do *if their people will consent*.

Again, "the doctrines of these Churches, it is said, are so opposed to those of Mr. Parker as to be deemed irreconcilable." And so are the doctrines of Brattle Street Church irreconcilable and opposed to those of Dr. Beecher and Mr. Kirk and and Dr. Hamilton, and yet the pulpit of Brattle Street Church has been occupied by such ministers, and by some who are *not* ministers, time and again. Once more, the Committee say that, "since the views of Mr. Parker have been distinctly avowed, in their whole length and breadth, he has never been called to officiate in any of the pulpits of the Fraternity, with but one exception." (I submit, here, whether *two* exceptions have not been presented, — namely, those of Rev. Mr. Pierpont and Mr. Clarke,) but suppose it only *one*, and then, how singular in this respect,

is the parallel between Rev. Mr. Parker's experience and that of Mr. Pierpont. Of the latter, also, it may be said, that, since the decision of a Council, more than three years ago, pronouncing him under censure, "he has never been called to officiate in any one of those same pulpits *with but one exception*," (that of Dr. Gannett). So report says, and what are we to argue from this? Surely it is not pretended that Mr. Pierpont is *theologically* a heretic. There must, therefore, be some other reason for the exclusion in his case. Allow me to ask whether the same rule which would exclude Mr. Parker from Suffolk Street Chapel, because he is excluded from the pulpits of your Fraternity, would not also close the door of that Chapel against Mr. Pierpont? If so, and the prejudice of the several pastors in your churches must be the criterion or condition of my fellowship or exchange with others, then I should prefer to vacate a pulpit so constrained. It seems to me the Committee present something like this issue, when they ask — "How can it be thought consistent with the benevolent design of these Churches, to call Mr. Parker to officiate in the Chapels when their pastors deem themselves unauthorized to admit him into their own pulpits?" It is evident, then, from the whole tenor of their letter, that the Committee expect of me a formal pledge of exclusion in regard to Mr. Parker, for they say, finally, — "Under their responsibility, as derived from the constitution, the Executive Committee will give assurance to the Fraternity that that gentleman shall not again occupy the pulpit in either of the Chapels, until they are otherwise instructed by some higher authority;" and to that higher authority, gentlemen, if it exist in the "Central Board" or the

Fraternity at large, I might, perhaps, appeal with something like a belief that no sentence of exclusion with regard to any Unitarian minister would be by them established or confirmed, — but I am willing to consider that, as you claim discretionary power, so your decision is sufficiently final and irrevocable.

But I cannot, as it seems to me, with any propriety or consistency, bind myself, in any formal manner, to the assurances or prejudices of other persons. I would much sooner take the pledge in some other form, as thus, that, in future no Unitarian minister, so claiming to be, and no member of the “Boston Association” shall be admitted to the pulpit in Suffolk Street, and this would sufficiently exclude Mr. Parker, — but, beyond this, I can only say, the ministrations of that pulpit ought to be left, as they ever have been, by your liberality, to my own discretion, according as my judgment may reap motives from the future or wisdom from the past.

With great respect, I am, Gentlemen, &c.,

JOHN T. SARGENT.

Another meeting of the Committee was held December 5th, to act upon this letter, and a sub-committee appointed to take the matter into consideration, and report a suitable reply. That committee reported to the next meeting, held December 7th, the following answer, which was accepted, signed, and ordered to be sent.

BOSTON, DEC. 7th, 1844.

Rev. Mr. Sargent, —

SIR : — We have received your communication of the 29th ult., renewing the resignation of your office as Min-

ister of Suffolk Street Chapel. We regret that your conceptions of your position and duties as minister of that Chapel differ so widely from our own. From the views heretofore expressed by yourself to the Board, we had reason to anticipate your cheerful acquiescence in the suggestions made in our communication. We regret, also, that the character of your letter of the 29th, is such as to preclude the hope of any different or useful result by any comment or answer we might make to it. We therefore have no alternative but to accept your resignation, which we hereby do, to take effect as you propose, on the first day of January next. Still holding in grateful remembrance, as both we and those we represent have ever done, your services in behalf of this ministry, and tendering to you our sincere wishes for your future usefulness and welfare, —

We remain your friends,

RICHARD SULLIVAN.

THOMAS TARBELL.

J. I. T. COOLIDGE.

H. B. ROGERS.

S. K. LOTHROP.

The Committee deeply regret that aught should have occurred to injure or embarrass the beneficent action of the Fraternity. The Institution was never in so prosperous a condition. The debt with which it had long been encumbered, was removed. The Chapels were established in the favorable regard of the community. A new laborer was added to prosecute its great work of Christian benevolence; and every appearance seemed to promise years of unbroken and unexampled success and

prosperity. This event, as unlooked for as it is unhappy, has cast a cloud upon its prospects. The Committee have acted in the matter as in their judgment the best interests of the Fraternity seemed to demand, and in no spirit other than becomes the guardians of a Christian enterprise. They anticipated and desired no such result. They anticipated no such result because they considered what Mr. Sargent had said to some members of the Fraternity, on the occasion of a previous exchange with Mr. Parker, to be an assurance that it should not occur again — and because they knew that the sentiments expressed in their first communication in regard to Mr. Parker, were in accordance with views expressed without dissent, to Mr. Parker himself, by the Ministerial Association, of which Mr. Sargent is a member.* That they desired no such result, the tone of that communication and the vote with which it was accompanied to Mr. Sargent fully declare. They were willing, and would have been pleased to have conferred longer with Mr. Sargent, and to have endeavored to arrive at a conclusion, which should have been mutually acceptable. But the character of his last communication, opening only a wide field of endless discussion, and presenting certain charges to which the Committee did not feel themselves authorized to attempt a reply, seemed to preclude the hope of a different result from the present, and

* This was done at a meeting held the 23rd day of January, 1843, Mr. Parker being present by agreement, and his views and writings being the appointed subject of discussion. At this meeting of the Association, all the Boston members, with the exception of Mr. Pierpont, were present. Rev. J. F. Clarke was not at that time a member of the Association.

leave them no other alternative than to accept his resignation.

Mr. Sargent's resignation taking place on the first of January, the Committee have secured temporarily the services of Rev. Joseph Harrington, Jr.

The Committee recently received the following paper from Rev. Mr. Waterston, on the subject of their communication addressed to the ministers at large.

BOSTON, JAN. 3d, 1845.

*To the Executive Committee of }
the Fraternity of Churches. }*

GENTLEMEN : — Your communication of Nov. 22d, was duly received, and, on reflection, I consider it a duty which I owe to myself, as well as to you, to state my views of the subject upon which you have written. Any measure which interferes with the proper liberty of the pulpit, I believe should be sacredly resisted, and anything like unchristian exclusion should be met with an earnest protest. If I believed that either of these was intended by the Committee I should feel the deepest regret, but I am confident that nothing could be more at variance with the real feelings of the Committee, as it certainly would be with all their former proceedings.

Much is justly said of the Liberty of the Pulpit; but I have never understood that in advocating such liberty, we were thereby bound to open the pulpit door to all persons who might be ready to speak, however crude or pernicious we might consider their views. There is certainly some limit. Who ever thought that all mankind were to be welcomed into our churches, to proclaim their

convictions,—however honest? I do not recognize any new feature, at the present time, from what we have always maintained respecting liberality of sentiment and the freedom of the pulpit. I have never understood that the exercise of liberality was to be always tested by willingness to exchange pulpits, but rather by the exercise of candor and justice, in weighing the opinions of those from whom we differ, and in allowing that views which we consider seriously erroneous may be honestly held, and that if those who hold them live a godly life, and are faithful to the highest idea they can obtain, they will be accepted of God. In the step taken by the Committee I do not understand them to have departed from this broad idea.

In regard to the case before us, I feel bound to state in justice to my own convictions, the principle upon which I have acted during the five years of my ministry. I have endeavored to keep my mind ever open to the reception of truth; and by a prayerful study of the scripture, and with the use of such powers as God has given me, I have sought to arrive at just conclusions respecting truth and duty; and I have also sought to look upon all who have come to a different result, with christian kindness and candor. Still (while I would allow to every one freedom of thought) I have a respect for my own convictions; and I believe, as I believe I live, in the great facts and truths recorded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When therefore I hear another maintain that the miracles of Jesus are but “myths and fables”;—that the Saviour himself was frequently “mistaken”;—that “the writers of the Gospels might represent him as teaching what he did not teach”;—when it is unqualifiedly asserted that

“the Evangelists have mingled with their story puerile notions, and tales which it is charitable to call absurd”; — when a belief in the Lord’s Resurrection is distinctly denied; — when the account given in the New Testament of his subsequent history is asserted to be “impossible”; — and when those who have faith in the Gospel Record are spoken of in tones of sarcasm and abuse, I cannot feel that any true view of spiritual liberty should lead us to throw open our own pulpits purposely, that such speculations and assertions may be scattered abroad.

Mr. Parker says, in his publications, that he looks upon the Christianity of the Church as “little better than heathenism.” He and his friends would, perhaps, call it persecution, if a similar freedom of speech were used respecting his views. He says that “genius and talent forsake the rotten walls of the Church, to build up elsewhere the Church of the first-born.” Not satisfied with denying the intended permanency of the Christian rites of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, alluding to those who still revere them, he sneeringly exclaims,

“Behold the child by Nature’s kindly law,
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw.”

More than once he indignantly rejects the thought of Christ either as a Master or a Mediator. The statements of the Evangelists have, to him, “but a low degree of historical credibility.” The miracles, by them recorded, are called “Monstrous prodigies”; and as a philosophical explanation of such prodigies, it is said, “the Mormonite finds miracles to-day, — will not the same cause, whatever it be, help to explain the visions of

Paul, the angels, and the miracles of the New Testament :”

I will not deny that a man has a right to hold such views, however unreasonable they may seem, or that, if he will, by pen and by speech he may proclaim them, and, with a zeal worthy a better cause, seek to make proselytes. But I do not understand that it is the test of an enlarged or enlightened liberality, for those who deem such views untrue and injurious to wish them declared from their pulpits. If one man has a right to hold such views, others certainly have an equal right to reject them, and to reject them freely and fearlessly, as, in their belief, unscriptural and untrue. There may be much display of rhetorical skill, and expressions of great beauty, and evidences of varied research, yet if, either in plain or in poetic diction, the miracles recorded in the Gospels, are declared to be “fabulous and absurd,” then the sacred volume is represented as irretrievably entangled with misrepresentations and falsehoods; and I should hardly suppose, that it would be considered persecution, if the holder of such opinions should not be urged to proclaim them within what he calls, “the rotten walls of the Church.” There are some in the community who seem to consider that the independence or sincerity of a Christian Minister is to be doubted, if he does not welcome these doctrines into his pulpit. I believe such a thought can find a home in few breasts, except such as are strangers to the views themselves.

Believing, as I do, that the Christian Revelation is indissolubly connected not only with the character, but with the supernatural works of its Author, and that the miracles of Christ were among the most beautiful and

divine mediums by which he expressed his beneficence, and through which he conveyed to the world much of his Spiritual Truth;—seeing, as I do, that these are woven together from the beginning to the end, in harmony with all, and perfecting all, I feel that I could not dissever them, if I would, and I would not if I could. And I am free to say that my present feelings are opposed not only to the views themselves, but to taking any active steps (as I feel that I should do by opening my pulpit for them) to have them diffused through the community. I believe them utterly false, and I could not, therefore, as a lover of God and the Truth, seek their promotion.

Very respectfully,

R. C. WATERSTON.

All which is respectfully submitted for the Committee,
J. I. T. COOLIDGE, *Secretary*.

At a full meeting of the Fraternity, held on Sunday, January 5th, the above Report was presented, and the following votes passed with two dissenting voices.

“ *Voted*, That this Board entirely approve the proceedings of the Executive Committee in relation to the resignation of Rev. Mr. Sargent.”

“ *Voted*, That the Report be accepted and printed under the direction of the Executive Committee.”

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

THE
ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.



BOSTON:
PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS.
1845.

REPORT.

THE history of the Benevolent Fraternity the past year has been given to its friends by the publication of the Semi-Annual Reports of the Ministers at Large in October, and of the Quarterly Report in January. Little, therefore, remains to be said by your Committee in their present Report, save what is said by the ministers themselves. -

Though in some respects the year has been a trying and perplexing one, your Committee have much satisfaction in renewing the expression of their confidence in the sound and healthy state of the Institution committed to their charge. It has been an eminently prosperous and successful year, as respects its financial concerns and the enlarged operations of the Ministry; and gratifying in the testimony it has received of the deep root it has taken in the sympathies and approbation of the community. Your Committee have met with trials and perplexities in the discharge of their responsibilities, but they have endeavored to meet them firmly and calmly; and the course they felt bound to pursue, has increased, we

rejoice to believe, the public confidence and regard. It is scarcely to be expected, even if it should be desired, that we should be exempt from trials.—Every year has its own, which serve the double purpose of enkindling anew our interest, and of drawing the attention of those who would otherwise become indifferent. Through all, the Fraternity has kept on its way, constantly enlarging the boundaries of its usefulness. Nothing has yet occurred to cause one retrograde step. The most formidable difficulty, perhaps, it has had to encounter, was that alluded to in the last Annual Report, growing out of opinions entertained by some minds and publicly expressed, unfavorable to the Chapels as parts of a ministry to the poor. The effect was only a quickened interest in the Institution, and a more efficient desire that ample means be collected by which both the Chapels, and the visiting from house to house, both the folds and the seeking the wandering sheep, should be more zealously prosecuted. And through exertions then made, your Committee have been able to add one new laborer, Rev. Mr. Burton, to the work, whose sole object has been, without the charge of a Chapel, to go through the city, collect the statistics of poverty, investigate its causes, and perform all the duties of a Christian visitor. We would bear earnest witness to his zeal, activity and good service, and to the growing importance of his sphere of labor. His Report, which will be read, will show what has been his course, and how much he has effected during the last eight months. And now that the Fraternity has again been brought before the public, somewhat out of the line of its usual operations, as it has been in one of its acts the subject of praise and censure, your Committee cannot but hope that attention drawn

will be but interest excited in the great cause in which it is engaged. That cause must prosper. It must keep pace with the progress of Christianity. The poor must have the Gospel preached to them. They claim, and have a right to claim it at the hands of their more favored brethren. And that claim will be more generously answered, as from year to year Christianity leaves a deeper impress on the hearts and consciences of our citizens. Progress has been the characteristic of the Fraternity. Each anniversary has had its tale of advancement, mingled with so much alone of discouragement as serves to keep alive interest and quicken a deeper energy for the future. Nothing has checked our progress; may we not say, nothing can but our own unfaithfulness and the decay of Christian love in our hearts.

It is with great regret that your Committee have to mention the resignation of Rev. Mr. Waterston, the long and faithful agent of your philanthropy. They have expressed, in the name of the Fraternity, the gratitude they feel for his devoted and successful labors as Minister at Large, and the assurance that their best wishes for his future usefulness will accompany him to the new sphere of labor, upon which he is about to enter. The resignations of Messrs. Sargent and Waterston, have left two offices to be filled. Rev. Mr. Harrington was appointed, for three months, to the Suffolk Street Chapel, from the 1st of January. His appointment has since been continued to the first of July. Rev. Dr. Bigelow, late of Danvers, has been invited to take charge of the Pulpit and Ministry at Large, connected with the Pitts Street Chapel, for three months from the first of April, and has accepted.

Your Committee ask leave to lay before you the following passages from the last Semi-Annual Reports of the Ministers at Large — as disclosing the present condition and operations of the Institution :—

REV. R. C. WATERSTON'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

It is now eight years since I became partially connected with the Fraternity of Churches, and more than five since I entered fully upon the labors of the Ministry at Large, and have supplied the pulpit entrusted to my care. And now that I am about to enter upon another field of labor, and recall the experiences of the past, scenes of poverty and privation, of sin and sorrow, pass in close procession before my mind.

From five to eight years I have been familiar with the abodes of want. In that time I have constantly been called to witness suffering of every description. Now, it has been presented in the workings of remorse, and, again, in the unsuccessful struggles of weakness to keep itself from want. Now, it has been seen in the agony of the wife contending with the brutal treatment of an intemperate husband, and now in the wretchedness of childhood under parental neglect. I have been called to unnumbered homes, which were desecrated by unhallowed passion, and which had been robbed, by human folly, of happiness and almost of hope.

I have gone into such scenes, rejoicing to feel that I went as a messenger from my fellow-christians, in the

spirit of christian love, to disseminate the principles of the Gospel ; and when I now look back through the years which have passed, and recall the varied scenes of distress which I have been called to witness, I feel as if much had been accomplished for temporal relief, and still more for spiritual redemption. Physical suffering has often called for a remedy, but a greater evil has been found in moral want, in human debasement, in a corruption of the affections, and a perversion of the appetites. What can be more terrible than a stagnation of the intellect, united with an ungovernable sway of the passions. It may convert the precincts of home into a type of hell. Such instances are far from uncommon among the abodes of want. And amid such degradation is one of the most important spheres for the Minister at Large. He admonishes and entreats. His presence commands respect, and he can frequently exert a permanent influence.

No one can reflect upon the lanes and alleys of a city,—its dense population, often crowded into filthy and unventilated dwellings, without acknowledging the demand for such a ministry, and realizing, in some measure, the vital importance of its work. There are difficulties and discouragements in such a labor. It is often wearing both to body and mind ; but, still, even in the darkest pathway there are gleams of light ; and one home made happy, or one soul redeemed, will be an ample recompense for days of toil. I feel grateful in being able to assure the Fraternity that such a recompense has been often found, and that it is a matter of positive certainty, that every faithful minister to the poor will find much to accomplish in such a sphere ;—enough to tax his powers both of body and mind, and, by constant fidelity to his work he, cannot fail to

restore many who have fallen, and to comfort many who are wretched.

Since I have been in the Ministry I have seen the profane, the inebriate, and the Sabbath-breaker wholly reclaimed. Some, who seemed to fear neither God nor man, have now been, for two and three years, worthy members of my church, and have lived throughout that time as honest and industrious citizens. Homes that were cheerless and wretched, are now neat and comfortable; and children, who dreaded a parent's approach, are now protected from harm by a parent's love.

But the homes of the poor are not all squalid and miserable. Hundreds among the needy are second to none in natural refinement, and the abodes of such are always characterized by neatness. A few simple flowers may bloom at the window, and a room which has few comforts will still look cheerful. There is a sunlight of the heart, which at times throws a moral splendor over the dwelling of want. The visitor among the poor will find it one of his privileges to be welcomed to such homes. It will be his solace through the more dreary labors of his day. The cordial reception with which I have been received for years past into such abodes, will ever be treasured as among my most pleasant recollections.

To those who are thus situated, the Minister at Large becomes a valued friend. The thought of his kindness makes life to them seem more desirable. I count it as an unspeakable favor that I have been connected with so many such homes. Persons more worthy of Christian regard and affection cannot be found, and the value of this ministry to many of this class is beyond words to describe.

By leaving this Ministry, were I to forfeit the privilege

of visiting homes like these, I should certainly remain where I am. But I feel that, while other duties open before me, I can still devote a portion of my time to visiting among those for whom I must ever feel a continued interest.

In these two classes of the Poor, we have every variety; the worthy—the honest—the industrious;—and the degraded—the groveling, the intemperate, the licentious, the brutish. Here are the realities which correspond to what has been so vividly portrayed by the hand of genius. Why should we be moved by fiction more than by fact? The tragedies of real life have as deep a meaning, why should they not awaken as deep a pang as the pictures of imagination? Here, in the very streets of our city, and in dwellings near at hand, there are racking griefs and disappointed hopes, and corroding cares. Here is guilty joy, and the gloom of despair. Here is old age left to neglect, and innocent childhood tempted to perdition. Here is wasting sickness and the final struggle of death; and where these things are, who shall say there is no need of Christian kindness and care?

The proper distribution of alms I have long felt to be a serious topic. To be prudent and yet kind, to use a nice discrimination, and yet meet the necessities of the deserving poor, to grant what is right, and yet not diminish on the part of the receiver a proper self-respect, or willingness to labor,—these demand vigilant care and reflection. Imprudent alms-giving, I am satisfied, may be the occasion of great evil. Yet I am as firmly persuaded that there is often ample need for temporal relief, and that the thought of giving spiritual comfort without it would be a mockery. Within five years I have given

away \$1,841 95, besides garments and other things. Some have been in weekly payments for rent; at times I have given orders for groceries upon trustworthy persons, sometimes orders for fuel. Always in small sums, and generally in articles rather than in money, always in connection with visits, and after I have fully satisfied myself of the character of those aided.

To those kind friends who have liberally and voluntarily supplied me with the means of granting this relief I would, before leaving this ministry, return my sincere thanks. They have cheered me amid my duties, and by their beneficence have given comfort and happiness to many homes. In behalf of the suffering poor I would thank them.

Within five years I have officiated at *one hundred and twelve funerals*. Those who are acquainted with chambers of suffering and the hour of death, will know how much is connected with such a record that is not written.

Within the same time *fifty* have been united in marriage; and *one hundred and forty-nine* have been admitted to the church. Of these *five* were previously connected with other churches, leaving *one hundred and forty-four* who have been gathered into the fold of Jesus, and numbered as his avowed disciples.

Aside from an interesting Christian rite, and the solemn vows at the altar,—there has been spiritual history connected with these events. They have been the outward token of a new religious life. In some cases of an entire reformation of character, from that which was degraded and base to that which was exalted and pure. Vigorous manhood, cautious and severe—has undergone

a spiritual transformation;—new views have been received, new affections cherished, new principles acquired, and this has been manifested by a newness of outward life. The wayward and reckless have become *thoughtful*; the idle—*industrious*; the intemperate—*sober*; the indifferent and worldly—*devout*. Some have been young men, who have manifested their fidelity by resisting temptation and by not only continuing firm to their principles, but by making evident progress in truth and goodness.

The Chapel has been constantly well filled, and during the past winter, as upon previous winters, there have been three religious services upon the Sabbath. The Friday evening meetings have been continued the whole year through.

The Chapel Library contains at this time about *five hundred volumes*—generally well selected. Books are given out every Friday evening. These volumes have been, in nearly every instance, through the five past years, used with care and safely returned. This Library has been a source of great good.

The subject of morally neglected children has for several months past particularly awakened my attention. I will not dwell upon the subject at this time, as I have a Report upon the subject, connected with the Farm School, now in process of publication, which will in a few days be before the public.

The Sewing School, held in our Chapel every Wednesday afternoon, is well attended, and is instrumental of much good. The ladies who carry it on are unwearied in their efforts.

We have connected with our Sunday School *fifty-four teachers and over three hundred pupils*.—I know of few scenes more interesting than this band of fellow-

laborers, coming from the various churches to carry on their benevolent plans. And pupils from the tenderest years to maturest manhood gathered into classes to receive religious instruction. It has been my privilege during the past winter, not only to meet with the Teachers at their monthly meetings, but for three months we have met on each Saturday evening to study, in company, the lessons for the following day. Of my connection with the Teachers of our Sunday School, interesting as my relations have always been with them, I can truly say no year has been so pleasant as the past.

Separate from the Chapel Library, there is a Library for the Teachers, and another for the children of the school, and in the two latter are over eight hundred volumes. From these books are given out every Sunday.

In presenting this my closing Report, to the Fraternity of Churches, I would return my grateful acknowledgments for their constant kindness, for their friendly cooperation and untiring sympathy. Since I received their friendly invitation to enter upon the duties of the Ministry at Large, it has been my desire and my effort to carry out the principles of the Ministry in the most efficient manner.

That the work in which I have been engaged may still be generously supported, and successfully carried forward in all its branches, is my earnest hope; and I shall ever be happy to do all in my power to add to its usefulness.

Very Respectfully,

R. C. WATERSTON.

REV. MR. HARRINGTON'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

It is about three months since I entered upon the duties of the ministry connected with Suffolk Street Chapel. The apprehensions under which I engaged to perform these duties, I am happy to say, were never realized. The Society was somewhat shattered by the resignation of Rev. Mr. Sargent and by the circumstances attending it, but not to the extent which was supposed or feared by many. A few families permanently disconnected themselves from the Chapel, on account of the course pursued by the Executive Committee of the Fraternity, but by far the greater portion continue their connexion; and, while they lament that anything should have occurred by which they were deprived of the services of a loved and respected pastor, they have no exceptions to take to the measures adopted by the Committee.

The Sunday congregations are pretty large. At the commencement of the year, the Universalists opened a Hall, in which they have held regular services, since. With this congregation, most, if not all, of the Universalist families attached to the Chapel connected themselves. They had waited only for the first movement of their own denomination toward the establishment of a Society in the neighborhood, to leave the Chapel in a body.

But, notwithstanding the loss of these families, our congregations are thought by many to be nearly as large as ever—some say *quite* as large as ever. They are certainly increasing from week to week. Now and then

a family that left during the troubles, has returned, and occasionally a new family has applied for a seat. It gives me great satisfaction to state, that the prospect is highly encouraging. As the warm weather approaches, it is thought the Chapel will be well filled.

The Sunday School, under charge of Deacon Lincoln, who is punctual, zealous, judicious, indefatigable, is flourishing.

I have become acquainted with every family connected with the Chapel. Many of them are very poor, though few are in absolute want. Wherever I have found necessities to be relieved, I have taken care that they were relieved. There are but five or six cases of sickness within my knowledge.

The utmost good-will has been extended to me by all, and there seems to be a general harmony among the members of the Society.

I am, gentlemen, your friend and servant,

JOS. HARRINGTON, JR.

Boston, March 27, 1845.

REV. MR. BURTON'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

My service in the Ministry at Large commenced August 1st, 1844. My appointed duty was to seek the poor at their dwellings, learn their condition and wants by close personal inspection, and bestow such physical and spiritual aid as judgment might suggest; also, to gather such information concerning the extent, degrees, and causes

of poverty and vice, as opportunities would allow ; lastly, to assist my ministerial brethren at the Chapels when in particular need. But the principal duty was visitation. To accomplish this, some system of procedure must be adopted. It occurred to me that it would be well to have in view some general object of action, which did not specifically fall within the duty of any other ministerial visitor of the poor ; an object, moreover, in the utility of which all would concur. One item of prescribed duty was, to obtain all desirable information respecting pauperism and vice. Might not this part of my trust, therefore, be made a leading and general subject of attention ? In collecting the *statistics* of poverty, there would be acknowledged occasion for entering any door or speaking to any individual, whereby the desired result might be attained. Incidental to this, there might be rendered some aid to known and worthy families, in addition to what they already received ; but there would likewise be found the less known, the neglected and forlorn, to whom in the name of Christ and of common humanity I had special mission.

I knew of no better way of proceeding than to ask for the poor, and such were generally ready to receive the inquirer, for such, if they might not expect relief, were always glad of sympathy. It was a rule to call at every house whose external appearance indicated the residence of the needy. By the direction of others, some abodes were visited, which would hardly have been suspected of want. I learned also what I could from the more fortunate around, whom it was convenient to address. My progress, of course, has been slow. The persons visited were generally those poor who were known to be such,

and had received aid. Being in the well-known Ministry at Large, I found no difficulty in obtaining very particular accounts of the present condition and past history of individuals. There was often a minute detail of circumstances, of no statistical use indeed, but interesting and valuable as displaying peculiar shades of character, and as unfolding a page differing, somewhat at least, from any other page in the infinitely varied volume of human fortune.

In the course of my progress, there has been occasion to visit and admonish, over and over again, the habitually intemperate. The man of a liberal profession and of considerable standing and influence, has been lifted from the stupor of drink and the horror of despair, at the street side, and conducted to the Temperance Hall, and the pledge, and it is hoped to a recovered position and usefulness. The female from the country, deceived, and left in the house of pollution, has been aided to a place of safety and friends, and thence back to a widowed mother at her native home. The prison has been visited, and the endeavor made, that the bodily durance there should be consecrated to the soul's holiest freedom. The introduction of youth to school and to places of employment, has also occupied a portion of my time. Aid has been lent in finding suitable tenements for the stranger and the infirm. I have gone to and fro in search of those who might provide necessaries for the destitute.

I have entered the houses of the wealthy and beneficent to bring them to the places of suffering. I cannot but here remark, as I pass, that there need be no physical distress within the limits of the city, simply for the lack of what money will procure. I have been surprised at

the quickness of sympathy, and the immediate haste to lend aid.

Now, such being the general sensibility to the condition of the suffering, I am emboldened to put the question, Is not the soul greater, worthier, and far more capable of suffering than the body? If so, why should not the weary, heavy-laden and pained soul, be equally and as readily ministered unto by those able to carry relief? In my walks, I have met with several blind persons. It was not their fortune to be educated at the noble institution in our neighborhood. Their condition of life precludes the constant attendance, or the occasional visit, of the intelligent relative or friend, ever bringing from their wide knowledge numerous interesting items of intelligence, or the last published enchantments of genius, for the ear. These are in poverty, and surrounded by the ignorant. In their rayless solitude, the approach of almost any one is welcome, but what a blessing would be the descent of one from those high spheres of society, an acquaintance with which they have never known or expected?

The lips that could charm a polished evening circle by a tasteful elocution — could they not lend expressiveness and power to the holy, comforting word? convey food to a famishing soul — with a sweetness, moreover, adding even to the bread of life a more exquisite relish? Could they not, with a Christian zeal prompting, impart a fervent heat to prayer that would dissolve the hearer's heart in penitence, or expand and send it upward in the incense of praise? Cannot the voice that melodiously charms in the polished party, or joins a hymn to a father's prayer in domestic worship, pour its tuneful fascinations into the

far more sensitive ear of the sightless? What with converse, reading, prayer, and spiritual song, how might such a visiter induce penitence and peace to a fallen, wretched, blind man I know of, so that, as promised in the parable, joy shall be in heaven over this one sinner that repenteth. And would not those sympathising angels there feel that the being who caused this blessed change was even now, though on earth, one of their own glorious number?

Again, there are many in humble life, kept prisoners at home by domestic care, by sickness, or by lack of attire. Now, gentle words of sympathy and encouragement from the upper regions of leisure and rank would do more good at times, than a shower of coin therefrom. I know of a mother who for a livelihood surrounds her child with companions whose contact is poison and moral death. She knows the worth of purity and sends her boy to the Sunday School. She is perpetually gnawed by remorse, and promises, that after the gain of a year or two more in iniquity she will reform. O, that some other mother out of the thousand around, clad in the whole armor of God, would fearlessly enter that ill-famed alley, that pestilent abode, and reason, and warn, and tearfully implore, till that unfaithful parent should take the offspring of the long lost partner of her youth, and flee as from a pit of serpents!

O when shall the comparative value of flesh and of spirit be duly understood? When shall the beauty, — the glory, and the delightfulness of serving the lowly, but infinitely capable soul, be realized by the many, as now by the few?

For the sake of impression, I beg leave to quote a lit-

tle from the lip of fashionable intercourse. The kind heart beneath that lip will excuse the liberty. Indeed, that heart, I trust, will ere long flow out in an active philanthropy worthy of its nature, opportunities, and responsibility.

“O!” exclaims one who left the crowded, airless, healthless drawing-room the midnight before, “O, it would be delightful to go about and do good as some do, I know, but really I have no time. My health is rather delicate, and I must be as much as possible, every pleasant day, in the open air.” Or the lady may discourse as follows:—
“I have so large a circle of acquaintances, some of whom call on me every day, or, in turn, are to be called upon, that my time and strength are entirely exhausted. *Society must be kept up*, you know, and one does not want to give offence, and get ill-will from those who must be constantly met in general intercourse.” Again: the following is a fair specimen of a portion of the conversation at one of the calls alluded to by the lady.

Visitor. — “What a charming day?”

Lady at home. — Yes, such a contrast to yesterday.

V. — What an open winter we have had.

L. — Only think how short it has seemed.

V. — We only wanted a little more sleighing.

L. — What a brilliant party that was at Mrs. A.’s.

V. — Yes, and the entertainment was magnificent. In what perfect style she always has things!

L. — Did you observe Mrs. B.’s dress — *wasn’t* it superb?

V. — It was very showy, but, &c., &c.

L. — What a splendid sermon your minister gave us last Sunday afternoon.

V. — O, he is very eloquent. He uses such beautiful figures. He is a delightful preacher, truly. He is a dear good man too, we all love him *so much*."

This is a sample of the society that *must* be kept up in spite of all the evil that is waiting to be removed; evil that lies all abroad under common observation; evil that sends its miasma, poisoning, into the very breath, yea killing, into the very vitals of this same society. I would not be misunderstood. I speak figuratively, and mean deadly perils to the soul. I would not aver that the preceding dialogue fully represents conversations at the fashionable call, but I leave it to the consciousness and conscience of the thousand, whether they do not spend, in that not a whit better, time enough wherein to redeem the city.

I now present a different example. Would that the wide contrast might not be without effect! Suppose the same charming morning before imagined. It might have been, however, on the blustering yesterday, as it regards the spirit and purpose of yonder solitary walker. This lady is in delicate health like the other, and needs the refreshing air. But she breathes it while on her present errand, as well as if abroad for nothing else. She enters at length a house all occupied by foreigners except one chamber, up two pair of stairs. She climbs up to that miserably furnished room. The place and the occupant are no fictions. Stretched on that wretched bed, lies one who had once been beautiful. She has seen but twenty-four years, and is faded like a fallen and trampled flower. She is sick, and shuddering, fears it is unto death. She confesses that she has drank to drown thought. She dares not look upon the future. She hates

life and yet dreads its end. There lies a Bible on the table — it was her departed and heart-broken mother's gift. But a Christian sister has now come. There is consolation in her very looks before she has spoken a word. Then her inquiries, how tender, her tones, how soothing! that long unheeded volume is now taken up; a passage appropriately chosen is read with a pathos that melts the truth healingly into that despondent bosom. The reader now kneels close at the bed-side and gently takes the hand of the sufferer. She utters a prayer. In it there are no expressions of harshness. Her voice is low, but how earnest? There is a sigh, then there are sobs from the desolate as she proceeds. "The fervent prayer of a righteous one availeth much," — that Scripture is even now fulfilled. As the suppliant rises, her hand is warmly pressed by that which she had held, and she receives a look from those tearful eyes, gratefully eloquent beyond any power of speech.

This is enough for once. The stranger now leaves. The invalid strains her eyes after her, and snatches from the closing door the lessening view of her form. She wonders who it can be that has shown such compassion for her. To the woman who afterwards came up from an apartment below, she exclaimed "O, what an angel!" And was she not one?

The visit is repeated, and something like the same scene takes place for several days. At length there is deep contrition — there is repentance accepted of God. It is written in the Book of Remembrance, "*Forgiven.*" There is joy in heaven anew. With that lost one now found, there is a "peace that passeth understanding."

That noble, Christian woman! — *doer* of the great

Master's word. Mark her. If she had a thousand acquaintances, and she never visited them again, could they do any thing but admire, and venerate, and love? She is *keeping up society* in truth. She *lifts it up*. She *has society*. The redeemed, yet on earth, come and bless her. The spirits of "the just made perfect" love to draw invisibly near a sister spirit. She has the communion of saints and of the Holy Spirit. She is saving souls from perdition. Who will go and do likewise? Who will but *begin* to do? Men and angels are waiting to see.

Lately I have visited on the west side of Washington Street, in the vicinity of the Warren Street Chapel. Here I am able to present results more gratifying to my desire of usefulness in this ministry than my previous experience had led me to anticipate. I had gathered from the missionary Reports of another denomination, that there were probably as many as thirty-five thousand people in this city who did not regularly attend on Sabbath religious instruction. The question arose in my mind, where are they, and who are they? The majority cannot be the ostensibly poor, for those helped by the city and benevolent societies, as avowedly indigent, are few compared with that number, and many of these are already quite constant attendants at chapel or church.

I felt that I had a vocation to find and penetrate this undiscovered region of humanity. Here are thirty-five thousand souls whom no accustomed zeal receives statedly to sanctuary privileges. They cannot all be infidel, or even wilful neglectors of their religious natures. Who knows, but that there are many many goodly hearts hidden in obscurity, and waiting to be brought to the cheerful light by some benevolent seeker? How many con-

cealed causes of Sabbath neglect which might be easily removed, only find them out? Again: the Warren Street Chapel was soon to be opened for a congregation of adults. But this congregation is mostly yet to be gathered, and in no small degree probably from this class of willing and unwilling keepers at home, and careless wanderers abroad on the day of worship. I ought to be of some service in this new enterprise. At least, if I cannot bring additions to this new fold, I can find and send the stray to other shepherds that may be preferred. And here let me remark, that on my entrance into this ministry, I was determined to harbor nothing like sectarianism in my heart, and most certainly never to exhibit the least portion of it in my conduct.

In this great harvest-field, spoiling for lack of reapers, it would be base to catch at the stalks within or just before another's hand, when so much was left wide, too wide before my own grasp, rotting in the mildews, and shaken and shattered by the tempests of less fortunate life. I think I have been faithful to my resolution. In the case of non-attendance at church, I would inquire how are you educated? Where above all would you like to go? Whatever, then, the denomination preferred, I would invariably encourage such, to seek to be faithful to its meeting. I would obtain permission of families to acquaint some clergyman with their name and condition, that he might visit them, and take them under his pastoral care. With a continuance of these views and principles, I now set out on as thorough an investigation as propriety would possibly allow. My first object was the acknowledged indigent as before, and whatever statistical information their cases might present, and such bodily or

spiritual want as I might relieve. Next, I was to penetrate a higher stratum of society, somewhere imbedded in which were numbers, who were without regular moral and religious ministrations. The attempt has been far less difficult of execution than was anticipated. I have been welcomed with a cordiality, and been answered in matters of somewhat delicate inquiry, with a frankness that was surprising.

Let instances now somewhat illustrate the work. In a respectable house, there was a husband and father of robust and manly form, and intelligent countenance. But that form was bent, not with the depression of toil, but of anxious thoughts and feelings. Those features were very sad. He would have concealed his hard fortune, but his wife, with humbled pride and broken spirits, reveals the tale. They came a few months ago from the country. Sickness soon entered their new home, and snatched away the blessing of a child. Then, besides, accumulated debt, the father could not find employment. He trod the streets day after day and week after week, but he struck upon no path that led to the means of a livelihood.

They had attended no meeting on the Sabbath. First, they were strangers, then sickness prevented, then apparel of accustomed decency failed. In their former residence in the country, they were dressed and held their heads up equally with the best. Now the faded garment is a shame. The house rent was soon to put on its inevitable pinch. I offered to lend money till the avails of future business should come in, for such a man would at length certainly succeed. The offer was accepted, but with the averted eye and hesitating voice of a suffering pride. Near the day the money was absolutely needed, I called

again, and from a cheerful voice through a brightened set of features. I heard that work, and work to continue, had been obtained, and my favor not wanted. I hope to lead this family to some chosen sanctuary, there in all likelihood to abide and be happily edified.

There is another instance, the whole history of which, might it be related, would be truly touching. It was of one who was married to a northern man, and came from her home in the distant South about two years ago. Here, she was not only a stranger to the people, but circumstances had kept her a stranger to them still. She had scarcely entered a place of worship, and a clergyman had not once visited or spoken to her individually since she had been in the city. She was a church member in her native vicinity, but here she had enjoyed no sisterhood or communion. She seemed to fear that her privations and other trials, had made her religious affections numb. She wept, and placing her hand on her heart ejaculated, "all is not right here." The voice of consolation and prayer was most thankfully received. Her case was then immediately made known to a minister of her own persuasion, afterwards a religious and tenderly affectioned lady was introduced within her solitude, and it is trusted that life will soon wear with her a brighter aspect. In these cases, as well as many others that might be mentioned, I think that my appearance was peculiarly opportune and for good that might otherwise have been deferred unhappily long.

There are many families in which the wife and mother is kept almost perpetually at home by children,—the older may possibly be in the Sunday School. The husband thinks it hardly necessary to pay for a seat in

church, which his partner would seldom occupy, and being alone, it is then not worth while to be at pew expense for himself. He therefore stays at home on unpleasant Sabbaths, and on others carries a fitting curiosity now to this and then to that church, among all the fifty to be found in the city. His wife must wear away the weary day at home, distraction is added to heaviness, it may be by a fractious unmanageable child. The neighbors go out in their comely dresses at the cheerful call of the bells. Does she not, then sighing, recollect her own light-hearted girlhood, her unhindered forth-goings, her customary seat in the parental pew; and still farther, if her religious affections had been there called forth, how many hallowed associations must crowd upon her memory. But this cheerful scene of church-going disappears. The pictured remembrances of other years do not continue, and she bitterly realizes that she herself is a prisoner in her own home; unvisited in her long durance, yea, within a few doors of some son of consolation, yet never favored with his voice. I found such as now described who had not been within a church for years. To them the light of the Sabbath is almost as darkness, and the populous and stirring city on this day, but a solitude. The entrance of the Christian Missionary to these doors might be an era in the family, and bring relief to the prisoner. That unthinking husband may be induced to establish himself at a meeting, and take his turn in domestic care, while the emancipated mother shall rejoice in the recovered blessing of the sanctuary. But if she must still abide in this comfortless restraint, doubly valuable and welcome will be the repeated visits of the emissary from your Christian brotherhood.

As yet I have been through but a small section with

this more thorough search, and I have been utterly surprised at the number of families similar to those described—similar at least in respect to absence from Church. I have taken quite a number of names to be given to clergymen of different denominations. Some were those of their hearers whom they had not known and who were waiting for attention; other names were of those whom a visit and a warning word might bring under the regular Sabbath ministrations. I am continually finding families and individuals desirous of entering the Chapel under Mr. Fox's ministry, and no other sanctuary will be robbed thereby.

I regret that this more careful investigation was not pursued before. At first I knew not the way beyond the avowedly poor; indeed, I scarcely knew that I ought to find it. Hereafter with increasing experience and confidence I hope to accomplish much more than in the past, in the same length of time.

It may be well to describe the tract passed over in the less thorough mode of inquiry. It embraces all that portion of the city north of Leveret, Court and Market Streets, and all east of Washington Street, nearly to Roxbury line. In the section around Fort Hill, however, I mostly visited Americans only, omitting the thickly crowded foreign population till a future time. In other sections I have called on foreigners and natives alike. In the divisions thus gone over, some of the avowedly indigent may have escaped notice. Many of more delicate life and dependent only on private charity, most certainly did not become known. I groped my way along as well as an entirely inexperienced seeker could. I hope in the course of things to retrace my steps with the thoroughness lately attempted. As to formal

statistics, I beg to be excused from report until I have gone farther and collected more facts. My progress must be very slow if I am expected to do all sorts of missionary work as I go along. This I prefer to do, considering the statistical labor a general and continuous duty, but by no means my highest and most responsible charge.

Perhaps I shall find no better place than this to acknowledge the gift of one hundred dollars from the society of King's Chapel for charitable distribution. A portion of it has been put to the use intended; the remainder shall be applied with whatever good judgment I possess. For the same purpose, I had before received twenty-five dollars from some benevolent source, through Rev. Mr. Waterston. This was distributed accordingly. For all these means of good I am duly thankful in the name of the cause I serve.

On the Sabbath I have assisted a few times at the three Chapels, but have been called on to preach less than was expected. When not supplying the pulpit, I have visited in the way of my vocation to some extent. In service time, however, I have mostly attended different meetings through the city, to ascertain what accommodations and advantages there might be for the poor. I also wished to get acquainted with clergymen and Sunday school teachers that there might be such mutual understanding and interchange as would conduce to a common good. There is considerable room waiting to be filled among all denominations. All that is needed that this space may be occupied, is such inquiry and action as I have been pursuing of late, together with the warm sympathy and co-operation of pastors and other laborers in the moral and religious field. This sympathy and co-operation, I am

confident, will be extended. My intercourse with ministers and people of different denominations has been cordial and cheering. They all seem to give a God-speed to my work. In several instances I have been invited to take part in the services of the Church, and to address Sabbath Schools. For such liberality I am deeply grateful. It shall never by me be abused. I wish my sentiments and manner, in regard to sects differing from my own, to be as distinctly and widely understood, as any thing else in this Report, so I beg leave to add a little more. I enter their Church doors with the predisposition to be pleased and improved. I never dwell on doctrinal differences, unless they arrest my attention from their show of truth. On leaving, I make it a point to speak to others, if speaking at all, of those things only that seemed agreeable and of profit. I would not predjudice the unbiassed mind, let it hear and judge for itself. I do unfeignedly love the good of all denominations. Indeed, I feel kindly toward, and respect the very bigot, however stern and exclusive, if I can be satisfied of a godly sincerity of heart. God grant me the charity that never faileth.

In closing, there is one more topic to which I would draw attention. It is the cause of education in connection with my ministry. How very little is this great subject understood, even by the quite intelligent. How much less by the parents of vicious children, now growing up to a vicious maturity. I have spent much time in conversing with parents and especially with mothers, on their responsibility before society, and before God. I have lingered within their thresholds, have come away and gone back to them again in behalf of their children. I intend

to do a great deal more in this respect. I propose to collect parents in private rooms, in vestries and Chapels, and lecture to them on their duties, and the best modes of instruction. I should have done it during the winter, but a bronchial affection prevented; of this I am considerably relieved, and am now ready for utterance.

The educated and the richer, would that they all could realize their own intimate interest in the cultivation of the poorer; indeed their most solemn interest in leaving every thing else possible to be left to engage in the grandest, the most momentous of all causes, that of general education.

O! the sights and the sounds that are, but ought not to be. I cannot find language strong enough whereby to express their dangerousness to all our infant and yet uncorrupt population. I will not speak of quarrelsomeness, deceit, lying and profanity, except just to name them. It is of another frightful evil, of which, as a servant of a Holy religion, I would give warning. O! parents, parents! there is a moral cholera floating through every day's air, and it is a rottenness to those you love as you do your lives. Let me describe the plague and the victims. A son—he is an honor and a pride in his unblighted promise—but him and his danger I now pass by. Let me speak of a budding, beautiful daughter, the fittest emblem on earth of the cherubs above. Indeed, she has her own allotted angel, who stands before the heavenly Father's face, and turns thereto and prays for his charge, and looks down again upon her with ineffable love. But this angel of the Almighty cannot prevent the curse I deplore. O! there are those who were once as innocent as the heavenly guardian himself, from whom he must at length have

veiled his face, and turned back, and have fled farther into heaven. But the pure, precious daughter!—With what care and perhaps cost and taste, she is attired for the daily school. Should the rude boy bespatter that cleanly dress by his careless trip, she would be cautioned to beware of such approach. Should he in impudent sport purposely soil her apparel, word would be sent to his teacher, or his parents be visited about the affair. Should the vulgar lad persist in his abuse, he would be called a miscreant, and be taken care of by the police. But dresses may be cleansed and mended—replaced by new and better. Even a wound on the soft, fair cheek, may be healed, and at worst leave nothing but a scar. But there is another soiling—yea, a perilous wounding, of which there is too little surmise. That child of elegant attire and blooming loveliness, has never in her life heard an indelicate word. She passes a knot of boys at the end of the alley, and at that moment there flies from an impure lip, an expression that will be a poison to her soul, a blot on her memory forever. Its very novelty will fasten it from the first, no length of time can eradicate the foul stain—that obscene expression abides. There it is in childhood, in youth, in old age, in death. How many times, in passing that lane, sight and sound will force it up into baneful recollection. It will come even in spite of blushing purity's fervent prayer. Is it one word or phrase alone, and for once that is to be feared? Alas, no! Day after day for years, must the lovely and the beloved be exposed to all that is vile in speech. The utterers are not only in narrow lane, but broad street—at the school-house door—and indeed, at times before the threshold of every home. They are sprinkled and mingled every where.—

There is no escape. O! that it were realized how numerous these arrows of death are shot into the tender depths of the soul. They never re-appear on the lip it may be, but they fester with nameless corruptions through the invisible capacities within.

It is thus I think and feel. With the leave, then, of those under whose auspices I act, I propose doing what I can to inspire right views of education among those to whom I am sent. I respectfully request the aid of all parents and all teachers near whom may be my walk. I love this particular work with a long experienced affection. Finally, I love this ministry wherein I now am, with a deeply growing attachment. Take it in all its bearings, I wish nothing nobler for a vocation. I am devoutly grateful to Providence, I am most sincerely thankful to those who confided it, that this ministry is mine.

Very respectfully yours,

WARREN BURTON.

Boston, April, 1845.

The Board authorized the Executive Committee, at a meeting held April 24th, 1844, to request Mr. Barnard to furnish them with his Annual Report, in order that such portions of it as the Committee might think advisable should be noticed in the Report to this Board. Mr. Barnard has presented the following Report:—

REV. MR. BARNARD'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

After an interval of eight years, it is with sincere pleasure that I resume the duty of presenting an Annual Report of my ministry to your Board.

The last year, like all that have preceded it since my entrance into the Ministry at Large in 1832, has proved of increasing interest to my feelings and of increasing value to my convictions. I entered this department of Christian enterprise with a high regard for its objects and a lively hope as to its results. Every year, nay, every month and every week has abounded with inducements to renewed perseverance, zeal and faith. The year that is just closing has indeed been fertile in such fruits. I wish that I could lay them before you with the distinctness and force with which they are impressed upon myself, but have neither ability nor leisure to do so.

At the commencement of each year of my ministry I have felt myself to be entering upon another period of test or probation, both as to the position which the Ministry at Large ought to occupy in our estimation, and the direction which ought to be given to its endeavors.

The work itself is of such a character that every one engaged in it feels himself constrained to regard himself as an explorer upon its wide field, a learner in its great school, and an apprentice to its vast art. In my own case, the past year has presented this aspect of our duties with peculiar force. The preceding year had closed with a considerable pecuniary deficit

—and there was every prospect, that for the ensuing twelve months, the expenses of my ministry would be so far increased, and its income so much diminished, as to cause the question of its further pursuit to take the place of all others.

This had already been my experience, in part, from the beginning. A man must possess rare business talents, with unusual prudence and economy, to give himself heartily to this work without incurring constant and considerable liabilities and expenses. The Minister at Large has so little command over his time, his habits and methods are all so liable to disturbance and interruption, the demands upon his purse are so many and so incessant, his whole work, in one word, is so *expensive*, that his fortune must be very different from mine, if each year of his labors does not terminate with an increasing want of money. During the twelve preceding years of my ministry, my father had relieved me from such embarrassments; during the last year, I felt that there were limits to the dependence upon even such kindness, and have resolved to take up the work *de novo*, and to put every thing to the strictest test and the closest inquiry. You will pardon the personal character of this digression, and permit me to proceed to the results of my observation. I must throw myself upon your kindest indulgence while I proceed to advert to a few points of prominent and general interest in the all-important offices intrusted to my charge through the kindness of my fellow-men and the providence of Almighty God. These, I am happy to say, are too many in number, too plain in character and too serious in import, to admit of question or doubt. I can hesitate no longer.

I could never forgive myself should any consideration, except the sense of unfitness, ever lead me to abandon the work. And, in the hope of justifying in part such convictions to others, I would proceed under the following distribution or enumeration of the principal points embraced by the ministry at large. The first is poverty. The poor of both sexes—of all ages—of all conditions and degrees—approach the Minister at Large for relief, advice, consolation, instruction, salvation. What a vast work is presented in these relations alone! The stranger, the widow, the fatherless; the unemployed, the underpaid; the victims of their own bad habits, the victims of others' sins; the poor of society, the poor of the Lord—these all are to be visited, to be known, to be ministered unto according to the principles of social economy, human brotherhood and Christian charity. The past year has continued to bring me and all these classes of my fellow-beings into closer relations to each other. I trust that I am duly thankful for the privileges, in this respect, that I have enjoyed. Much that ought, and perhaps might, have been done, I have failed to do—but, day after day has seen other things completed which alone were worth the labor of a whole year.

The seasons have been favorable, and there has been no unusual want of employment in the city, yet I have never received so many applicants before, or been more truly the visitor and minister of the poor. The number of calls necessarily increases with each year that is added to one's continuance in this office. Were it not for the increased facility acquired by experience, and the increasing number of assistant visitors that he becomes

associated with, the Minister at Large would in a few years find himself overwhelmed with engagements. The human frame, patience and spirit, would be exhausted, and time itself would fail him for his calls. I have been favored with uninterrupted health throughout the year. At no period of my ministry have I been able to devote so much time to the daily habit of visiting. And one of the benevolent societies of the city continues to favor me with the services of a lady, whom they appointed several years since as my assistant in this very important portion of my work. Her walks and my own extend to five or six hundred families each year; and this great increase in numbers is also attended with many other points of advantage that none but a lady could secure for my ministry. From the outset, I anticipated great advantages from such an assistant. Each year abounds with new reasons to rejoice in my own privileges, in this respect, and to desire that all my fellow-laborers in the Ministry at Large were equally well supplied.

The kindness of friends has contributed to my poor's purse through the year; and early in the winter I was appointed an agent of the Howard Benevolent Society. These resources and the gift of a great many articles of second-hand clothing, together with the readiness of all the friends of our work to co-operate with me in the various offices of charity, whenever or however I have solicited their attention and aid, have enabled me and Miss Jones, my assistant, to do no inconsiderable amount of good, we trust, through the year. Want has been relieved; anxiety and distress have been removed; food and fuel and apparel have been furnished to the necessitous; children have been supplied with school-books;

rent, in some cases, has been paid ; and every thing in our power has been done to cheer and protect the humble poor, to secure the spirit of a wise and cheerful submission, or to foster the impulses of self-reliance and a good courage, which are so much richer gifts than gold or silver or all our other alms.

The want of employment is one of the greatest evils attendant upon the lot of the poor. Our city has witnessed great improvements in this particular within a few years. I was led, early in my ministry, to take a deep interest in every means that presented itself for increasing the facilities of approach between those in want of *labor* and those in want of *laborers*, taking these terms in their fullest and widest sense. I have witnessed with the highest satisfaction, one after another of the measures intended for this purpose, going into successful operation. The Minister at Large needs the aid neither of a poem nor of a novel to deepen his impressions of that sternest and truest form of all poverty—the want of work. And it should be gratifying to us all, that, in our favored community, there is, to meet this defect in our civilization, so much already established, which in other countries is adding a new grace to the productions of belles-lettres and poetry and calling a more humane literature into being. With my assistants and coadjutors in the Ministry at Large, I have reason every day to rejoice in the two Free Employment Offices of the city, and in all the kindred operations by which we are enabled to put so many of the poor in the way of earning an honest and independent subsistence. If, in any way, our influence has contributed to the establishment of these simple but efficient agencies of good, we are now more than reaping

our reward in the large numbers that we refer to these sources of information, in the relief extended to our own labors, and still more in the satisfaction afforded both to ourselves and the poor, in having so many thousands of them, every year, furnished with the means of employment.

Another great advantage which continues to accrue to the Ministry at Large, we may find in the enlarging number of individuals who give their personal attention to the cases of the poor. It may sometimes be felt there is danger that this ministry may supersede the action of private philanthropy, and result in a diminution of the time, thought, feeling and alms even, to be drawn from the private resources of the rich to meet the exigencies of the poor. Did I apprehend such consequences, I would not remain a moment in the field. Were there the least ground for this objection—were there the remotest prospect that the issue would be a decrease of private charity, a separation of the rich and poor, a barren isolation of the latter, leaving them only an official visitor, or an equally barren isolation of the former, confining their good works to the narrow stream of formal and delegated charity ; were the slightest tendency in this ministry to widen the fearful chasm,—already, alas! too broad—between the different classes of society, we had better all cut off our right hands rather than extend them in fellowship to those about to enter upon its pursuit.

The theory itself which may have given birth to these fears wore only a specious garb of truth. There are facts without number to counterbalance all such preconceived prejudices, and the result of each year's experience in this Christian enterprise, is abundantly sufficient to

prevent all such apprehensions for the future. To speak only of what has fallen under my own observation, I am not more sure of the increasing years of this agency than I am of its increasing success in multiplying the numbers, worth, and devotion of the private friends, personal visitors, and truly Christian almoners and ministers of the poor. My own hands have been greatly strengthened during the year, which such labors and such associates have just brought to a happy close indeed.

And as the more favored classes, to use the term significant of obligation no less than privilege, reflect upon their own position in society and learn to comprehend the duties they may meet and discharge, the pleasures they may receive and diffuse through their sympathy and co-operation with their own messengers of good tidings to the poor, I am confident that this ministry will not fail to become more and more truly a mediator between those whom God hath made to differ, in his wise providence, and for their own mutual good. Let the Minister at Large not go forth alone to his work; let him not be the visitor of the poor merely; let him have a welcome to the homes and hearts of the rich; let these hearts and these homes furnish other visits besides his own to the abodes of suffering and destitution, — and the work entrusted to his charge will prove, under the blessing of heaven, the dawn at least of that day which prophets have foretold; which the Sun of Righteousness arose to lighten, and which should be the object of our thoughts and purposes and lives, if we mean any thing by the prayer, “thy kingdom come; thy will be done *upon earth* as it is in heaven.”

For the sake of the poor, therefore, and because of its

value to them directly as a class, and indirectly through its action upon their brethren, the rich, it is my settled purpose to remain as long as I live in the Ministry at Large. I find its objects worthy of any price and every sacrifice. I pray to my heavenly Father for strength and grace to pursue them. I appeal to my fellow-men, with confidence, for countenance and support in this undertaking, whose maintenance is so truly fraught with momentous consequences to them and their children, as well as indispensable to the poor.

Another claim of this ministry we may consider under the head of Pauperism. I have already briefly alluded to this in speaking of Poverty. The two subjects are so closely allied that it is not possible wholly to separate them either in discussion or practice. The claims of poverty and the dangers of pauperism, present themselves simultaneously in every case offered to the Minister at Large. He and his associates in the work of Christian charity should never lose sight of either nor ever allow one to conflict with the other. And as it is both wrong and dangerous to separate them in our endeavors and pursuits, so it may not be strictly logical to separate them in treating of a ministry in which they both play so important a part. Still, I feel that experience may warrant the distinct treatment of pauperism and poverty, so far as I now intend it. The poor, like all classes of men, are between two points, one of danger, the other of safety. They may rise or they may fall, they may advance or they may recede; and, again, like all other orders and conditions of men, they are not left to themselves to choose their own lot. We speak of being the artificers of our own fortune. But it is true of none of us. It ap-

plies to no man — to no class of men. Nature does not recognise any such independent ranks. Providence does not intend any such isolation or self-sufficiency. For the great purposes of life, for a due comprehension of its lessons, and a worthy discharge of its duties, the rich are in every sense as dependent upon the poor as the poor are upon the rich. For weal or for woe all men are united together and must rely upon each other. I pass over this, however, to consider more particularly the extremes between which the poor may be said to stand and the consequent duties that are due to them from the rich. By kindness and the discharge of the offices of justice, humanity and Christian charity, we may do much towards securing their advance in the direction of safety. Our visits to their homes, our sympathy in their case, our relief of their necessities, our countenance and prayers, may be made instrumental in preserving all those traits of disposition, character and life, which are riches for the poor, honor for the lowly and salvation for the tempted. In this way may we aid the poor in attaining the good that is within their reach. It is under this aspect that I have treated of the claims of poverty in behalf of the Ministry at Large.

But there is another direction in which we may lend them our assistance. The poor are in danger of falling into pauperism. Want and dependence are of a depressing character. To be environed with adversities; to feel the stings of want and hunger and cold; to have all the goods of this world elude our grasp; to see ourselves debarred the pleasures, and graces and luxuries of life, and doubtful even of being able to provide for its decencies and necessities; to be thus poor, and yet not

lose our self-respect, or lessen our cheerfulness and good will, or part with any portion of our elasticity or industry, or integrity, requires a measure of faith, and virtue, and feeling, and strength, that is almost superhuman. Would it not be wholly superhuman, should the humble possessor of such graces find the contumely of the proud, the selfishness of the rich, the indifference of the worldly-minded arrayed *against him* in this sharp conflict. Neglect the poor, and in this way must they not become paupers?

But I have another danger also in view. To disregard the poor, to receive them unwillingly, to treat them coldly or harshly, to meanly grasp the prizes of life that have fallen to ourselves, and unfeelingly to see its blanks alone in their hands, is to depress and degrade them. The Ministry at Large, by increasing the union between the rich and the poor and by conveying the charities of the former to the wants of the latter, proposes to counteract the tendency. There remains another duty for those entrusted with this office of equal moment with this. The poor require kindness at our hands. Their best interests require us to exercise discretion also. Indiscriminate almsgiving, the encouragement of street beggary, especially where children are employed upon its errands, and whatever else serves to make such means of support a trade or profession, encouraging voluntary and reckless dependence, inducing idleness and loss of character and forming the habits of pauperism, — these are to be guarded against.

The prevention of pauperism and the relief of poverty are equally our duties. To give is charity, — and sometimes not to give is charity. I would present this view of

the claims of the ministry in question, partly because they are valuable in themselves and partly because experience leads me to fear that sufficient attention has not been bestowed upon them. Some years since, Dr. Tuckerman, Mr. Gray and myself opened a central office in the city to secure greater efficiency in this department of our labors. Tickets were issued to be used by those of our friends who could not give their personal attention to the cases of poverty presented at their doors, as a direction to this office and thus to our investigation and consideration in our several districts. The plan was received with all the favor it deserved, and large numbers of families supplied themselves with tickets. Applicants for alms were referred to us in great numbers. We visited their homes and spared no pains to exercise both kind feelings and good judgment in their behalf. The several city missionaries of other denominations united very cordially and efficiently with us. Every thing prospered for a while; but in the course of time the tickets passed out of use and the office was abandoned or devoted to another purpose. Some good, however, was secured. The measure led to the formation of the Association of Delegates from the benevolent societies, whose meetings are still maintained and through whom a vast amount of imposition is detected and pauperism prevented every year. Mr. Artemas Simonds and myself also availed ourselves of the movement to propose the establishment of the Boston Society for the Prevention of Pauperism. This met with sufficient favor at first to induce him to resign the superintendence of the House of Industry, at South Boston, and enter upon the duties of agent of the Society in the office which the Ministers at

Large were happy to vacate for him. Had he been retained in this position, thousands of dollars would have been saved every year which have been and are still worse than thrown away.

But the Society soon found itself unable to pay his salary. Application was made to the city government for aid. Would-be-politicians sneered at it as a job or office proposed for selfish purposes. An appropriation was refused that would have saved the city ten times its own amount. Private resources were not found more available. Mr. Simonds exchanged the situation for that of Clerk to the Directors of the House of Industry, where he continues to give abundant proof of his qualifications for the post of duty and usefulness that he was thus obliged to abandon. The Society continues in existence and its office has never been closed. No small amount of good is done hereby; but both the character and extent of its operations are very different from what was proposed and desired at the commencement. The prevention of pauperism by no means holds that place in the public regards and favor that it demands. The subject cannot be too often or too urgently pressed upon the community. We are ready to admit that our city enjoys rare advantages over all others on the globe in this particular. Our public schools, Sunday schools, and churches,—our free institutions, the habits and principles of our citizens have hitherto confined pauperism within limits that are not known elsewhere. But much, very much more remains to be accomplished, and my only hope of this being attempted is involved in the permanence of the Ministry to whose influences, for the last nineteen years, more than to that of any other one agency, I am confident, the good is to be

ascribed in which we may now so justly rejoice. The proper treatment of the poor, the treatment which embraces both their physical and moral necessities, both their present and future relief and well-being, the blending of charity and discretion into one and every purpose and act in their behalf, the Apostolical union of the serpent and the dove, is not to be assumed in a moment; it is not the creature of impulse or instinct; it is the inspiration and grace of God; it is the fruit of wide experience and long observation. We must wait, and seek, and pray for it. Every year, added to our continuance in that Ministry, which is but its school, brings new lessons and new principles. Every added measure of conviction and faith as to its ends, every imparted impulse towards the frame and temper in which its objects are to be pursued, is to be acknowledged as the gift and blessing of our heavenly Father. He who hopeth that in this way the divine favor is attending his steps will consecrate himself renewedly to his work and harbor no misgivings in regard to its support or its success among men. To dwell a moment longer upon details, I would add in this connexion, that I have learned to expend hardly a hundred dollars now, where I at first supposed a thousand was required, — that almost each day of my ministry now presents some evident case of deceit, hypocrisy, or imposition, that not long ago would have struck me very differently; and that all my experience and observation centre in the following single and all-important rule: — Never give without a previous personal visit to the home of the applicant. We earnestly beg all who cannot observe this rule for themselves, to permit the Ministers at Large or some such individuals, to do it for them. And I repeat,

it is by no means so much waste or loss of money, as it is human degradation and crime, loss of independence, character and principle, — in one word, pauperism, that is to be guarded against and prevented.

Illness and childhood — did I not feel, gentlemen, that I had trespassed, already, too far upon your patience — are the remaining points in which my ministry has continued to press itself upon my feelings and regards and upon which I should be happy to impart the results of my experience. I trust that my life and labors will be spared to do this on some other occasion.

Permit me to close this imperfect Report with assurances of my best wishes for your success in the duties entrusted to you. The few years that have passed since it was my duty to present an Annual Report to your consideration have been full of change. Dr. Tuckerman has died. Mr. Gray has resigned his place. Mr. Sargent and Mr. Waterston have entered and left the field. I have enjoyed the sympathy, counsels and aid of all these fellow-laborers in our Master's great work. 'Thousands with me will hold them in cherished and honored remembrance. I miss their presence. It is one of my highest aspirations never to lose the spiritual presence of the sainted father of this enterprise. With your Association and all the friends of the Ministry at Large, I would strive earnestly to lend my influence to perpetuate that work which is the truest monument to his name. And all my other former associates, I rejoice to believe, will carry into their new spheres of occupation the principles of that ministry in which, if my testimony is of any value, they have labored so happily and so successfully. I am thankful for the appointment which has secured Mr. Burton

for our worthy and common work. May he long continue to pursue that department of it in which he has already seen and done so much. And in the further appointments that await the action of your Board, you have my earnest prayers, through the Founder of our faith and the divine Original of our Ministry, to the Father of Lights and the God of all Grace and Wisdom.

You will rejoice with me in our having secured Mr. Fox's services as an assistant preacher at the Warren Street Chapel. He commences the formation of an adult congregation and church, on Sunday next, with every prospect of success. Many of our pupils are now old enough to require a more mature service than that suited to children; many of our teachers need something of the same kind; and a very large number of the parents and friends, who belong to none of the parishes of the city, will gladly avail themselves of this opportunity to join a regular church and congregation.

I have long desired this addition and improvement to the Chapel. I have for years hoped that Mr. Fox would be at liberty to assume the charge of it. The providence of God, that now seems to smile upon my hopes and endeavors, lays me under new obligations to strive after perfection in all that relates to the Chapel, and to the Ministry at Large from which it sprang and to which it will ever be devoted.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES F. BARNARD.

Your committee will not detain you by any comment upon these Reports. They ask attention for a moment

to the financial position of the Fraternity. We proposed to raise on the last year \$5,000. Of this sum there have been collected \$4,730 34, and expended \$4,292 85, leaving a balance in the treasury of \$437 39. Your Committee have only to desire that subscriptions may be kept up to the same amount as this year, and they will have it in their power to retain the ministers, already employed, in their most worthy work.

In concluding their Report, your Committee have merely to say that the same great cause in which we are engaged is successfully prosecuted by others here and in other places. The Episcopalians have established two or more free Chapels in this city, and we would welcome them as fellow-laborers. In Providence, Rev. Mr. Babcock has succeeded Mr. Harrington, and is prosecuting his labors, it is believed, with eminent success. In Baltimore, Rev. Mr. Dall is still engaged, and his late Report is full of encouragement. In Lowell, Rev. Mr. Wood is zealously and usefully engaged. Our accounts from England show that the efforts of our friends there continue unrelaxed. Let us then be encouraged by our own prosperity, and the progress of our cause. The work to be done is great, and seeing we are compassed about by so great a crowd of witnesses, let us run with new ardor and zeal, the race that is yet before us. And may the divine blessing continue to fall on our labors henceforward, as it has in the times that are past.

Respectfully submitted, for the Committee,

J. I. T. COOLIDGE, *Secretary.*

Boston, April 3d, 1845.

THE
TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.



BOSTON:
PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS.
1846.

R E P O R T .

THE close of another year finds the concerns of this Fraternity in a satisfactory and prosperous condition. In many respects it has been a year of anxiety and difficulty. At its commencement the resignations of Messrs. Waterston and Sargent had left the pulpits of the Chapels and the ministries connected therewith unfilled, and, as should have been anticipated, the outward evidences of success, such as attendance upon the public services of the Chapels, &c. were quite discouraging. It is natural that the number of worshippers at the Chapels should be greatly affected by these changes. They have no other interest in them than what attaches to a favorite pastor. It is the personal friend they go to meet there, not the mere preacher; one who has sought them out in their sorrows, vices or solitude, and bound to himself by the benefits, temporal and spiritual, he has conferred. When he leaves, the ties which hold him to this Institution are greatly weakened, if not wholly broken. Disappointed once, they are not forward to bestow their affections upon a stranger; and having no voice in his elec-

tion, they cannot be expected to rally round him as other parishes in similar circumstances. The new incumbent has therefore an arduous work to perform, and his success is not hastily to be determined. He will find the sanctuary, once filled by a crowd of worshippers, left desolate ; and only as he becomes known by his pastoral walks and the services he renders, and the interest he manifests ; only as they shall discover that the poor have the deepest sympathy and love of his heart, should he expect to be successful in winning back the straying, gaining the affections of the disappointed, and reviving a fresh interest in the great purposes of the ministry. Accordingly, the first months of the year wore rather a discouraging aspect. But since the permanent appointment of the present agents, affairs have been growing constantly more prosperous. The peculiar work of this ministry, seeking the poor, visiting from house to house and investigating the sources of pauperism, vice and crime, is now very thoroughly and faithfully performed. Our three ministers, with the aid of Mr. Barnard, who affords them the benefits of his long experience, and co-operates with them in all their plans and objects, have entered upon their labors with a spirit and zeal which promise the largest success.

The Committee cannot but express their gratification in the fact, that through all difficulties and embarrassments the friends of the Institution have not failed in affording the encouragement and support needed for the successful prosecution of its important and Christian work.

Without further preface, however, the Committee ask leave to lay before you the following passages from the Semi-annual Reports of the ministers themselves, believing

they give the best account of what is doing through the instrumentality of this Institution for the classes for which it is especially designed.

DR. BIGELOW'S SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.

* * * Under these circumstances, despite some irrepressible misgivings, — looking upwards, above all, for light to guide and an arm to uphold, — I set forth on my mission. I did not forget that the office assigned me was a ministry *at large*. Accordingly, having made an early acquaintance, by the obliging kindness of Mr. Waterston, and others, with most of the families, the comparative few, who remained fast to the Chapel and were considered as numbered among its stated worshippers, I advanced alone in the broader field of my labors, the circle of which has been since continually widening. It now embraces in my familiar walks one half of the city; and few quarters there are, lanes or by-places in its entire compass, left wholly unpenetrated by an occasional call of exploration. Within this space I have entered three hundred houses; the number of my visits among which has exceeded seventeen hundred the year past, not including many scores of others not strictly made in the dwellings of the poor, but mansions of another class, still in the business and for the furtherance of the objects of my ministry. (142 such recorded.) My records show since the 1st of January last, a total of six hundred and fifteen calls or visits noted on

my list within that space ; and reckoning back to the beginning of winter, (Dec. 1st,) the number for the four months is found to fall little short of eight hundred.

My experience during the first half year of my ministry by no means prepared me for so great an increase of labors, in this branch of duties, during the last two quarters. The little disposable time left on my hands within my own doors has been chiefly engaged by the necessary attention to the calls of others made upon me by virtue of my office. Saturday night has often found me wearied and worn, with scarce an hour's leisure secured the preceding week for preparation of the public religious services on the following Sabbath. Yet I have chiefly occupied in person the Chapel Pulpit, having been absent only six half days from September to March, with but occasional aid from some clerical brother. A Friday evening lecture was re-established in our vestry in early autumn, and has been continued to this time. Our Sunday meetings for worship, which at first were very thin, have been gradually enlarging. They have presented quite an encouraging aspect the past season ; and in pleasant weather, at the afternoon service, they number on an average three hundred worshippers.

The Sabbath School connected with our Chapel is in prosperous condition. A new interest has been awakened in it, and a new life and impulse imparted to its operations since the annual celebration in December. It enrolls two hundred and eighty pupils, instructed by upwards of forty faithful and devoted teachers ; and the good it exerts both among the children and the families of the poor is incalculable.

With the other functions of a minister at large are asso-

ciated, as is well known, those of almoner to the indigent. This duty, though at times very gratifying to exercise, is one of much delicacy and frequent embarrassment. It requires tenderness blended with discretion, sound judgment and caution, the tact of discrimination, guided and regulated by the lights of experience. The first impulse of the heart is to be moved by the sight of palpable and abject want; to give, too, give at once pecuniary alms as the best means of meeting, and effectually to redress so urgent a case of suffering. But such impulse, if yielded to in the manner intimated, may not be always wise. The immediate relief,—a contingent and doubtful good,—may be fraught with serious and positive harm. For the charity bestowed may foster improvidence; it may pamper idleness and prove a bounty on vice. Laziness and sloth, dissimulation and falsehood, intemperance and dishonesty, these, one or all, may be encouraged thereby; and they may find their account in practising upon the compassions and credulity of the bountiful and humane. Cases of the grossest deception have turned up in my own experience; and I have almost ceased to wonder why it is that the public almoner, long versed in his employment, and familiar with the tricks of imposture, feels distrust of every new case of mendicity, questions so narrowly the grounds of its claims to sympathy and confidence, in fact, inclines more to the harsh than the merciful construction of the various forms of distress and pleas for charity, obtruded on his notice. But there is danger of carrying this temper too far. If to err be human, an inevitable weakness, better be it on the side of tenderness than sternness. We are not to shut our eyes nor our ears to the wretchedness of want in any wise; we should *weigh*

the case, no doubt, to apply the best help,— nay, carefully investigate it whether to give or to withhold ; but in examining, it should always be with minds disposed for charitable as well as righteous judgments. And we are not to forget that whereas a blessing is pronounced on him, the reflecting man, “ who *considereth* the poor ; ” on the other hand it is written for our warning, when tempted too lightly to reject their suit,—“ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, thou shalt not harden thy heart nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother ; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him ; and beware lest thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.”*

In the performance of this duty, I have felt a double responsibility for the due appropriation of the means placed at my disposal by the bounty of the benevolent. The moneys actually disbursed by me the year past in charities to the poor, either in cash outright for rent and other uses, or orders paid for fuel, groceries, shoes, and sundries, amount to \$482 24. This sum has been partly supplied by the monthly donations of those munificent “ Sisters of Charity,” the Ladies of the Tuckerman Circle ; and partly from other and private sources, some the more gratifying from being wholly unlooked for.

There is a noble spirit of philanthropy at work in this city, ever teeming in plans, nor backward in support of institutions and efforts for ameliorating the physical, as well as the moral and social ills of life. But it may be questioned whether much that is so noble in impulse may not be running to waste, much of it be misapplied

* Deut. xv. 7—9.

and rendered in a measure ineffective for the ends designed. A vast amount of money is annually expended by the city and numerous voluntary associations for the relief of indigence, not including the multifarious sums bestowed in private charities. There is a multitude of operations, but a want of due concert and harmony of action. Our benevolent associations, from jealousy of *espionage* or some other cause, act too much independently one of another, and with too little knowledge of each other's transactions. A consequence often is that objects, not the most worthy, become the beneficiaries of several such institutions at one and the same time.* A partial

* Cases have come to my knowledge where families, by no means destitute, have drawn the full monthly allowance of fuel from the city the past winter, and procured additional supplies from three at least of our Benevolent Societies, through ignorance, by the latter, of like aid being obtained elsewhere,—this, too, exclusive of money, groceries, &c., secured in the same quarters, or from city missionaries and private individuals, to an amount not known. Others in absolute distress, yet, because not applying, either from ignorance or sheer modesty, for a share in the distributions of our public or social charities, must have suffered sorely from destitution during the dreary winter months.

While on the subject of this note it may not be amiss to add, that the reputation of Boston for benevolence, with the long list of philanthropic institutions which it boasts, is beginning to allure amongst us not only many poor, but the idle and vicious from the country at the approach of winter. A colony of this stamp from New Hampshire, consisting of several large households, all well conditioned in health of body and capacity for labor, planted themselves down about Thanksgiving time in the neighborhood of Grove Street. Bringing little or nothing with them, they appeared wretchedly needy, and the setting in of the wintry cold awakened the sympathies of the charitable in that neighborhood and abroad in their behalf. Much was done for them by societies and wealthy individuals.

check, it is true, is imposed by the monthly meetings of delegates in the Temple from a portion of our charitable societies; but the check is only partial, first, from the incompleteness in such representations, and, secondly, the imperfect and irregular returns for the most part made by the members in actual attendance at those meetings. There is wanting, obviously, a better understanding and a wiser and more comprehensive system in the administration of our social charities; more of unity of plan and operation; a banishment of narrow jealousies, and of all sectarian predilections and prejudices in the choice or exclusion of objects of aid; in short, a striving together with one heart and mind, in the noble emulation to diffuse more generally the pure spirit of Christian beneficence, that, while the impositions of the unworthy shall be detected, the claims of the meritorious, the truly deserving, may be better known and understood, and their wants be succored or removed.

That there has been great distress from destitution in Boston the past winter, is too painfully true. Whatever the cause, the fact is admitted, that there has been an unusual scarcity of employment for the industrious and

Their children were clothed from the depositories of several Sunday Schools, (they were not particular of what denomination,) but at these their attendance subsequently was not remarkable for constancy. It turned out that the parents were none of them *teetotalizers*; they were all hard drinkers, and most of them drunkards. Collectively, they were idle, vicious, and degraded. When at home, these people were by no means on the list of paupers. One of them it was ascertained, owned a house in the place he came from, which he shut up at his temporary removal to the *metropolis*; and a handsome sum in dollars was seen in his possession, in an unguarded moment, probably when in liquor, by a person who was my informant.

well-disposed during the inclement season. Hundreds, nay, thousands of hands have hung idle and inactive, when there was an earnest craving for occupation, useful occupation of some sort; and it was sought and found not.*

I apprehend that with the rapid increase of strangers and foreigners in our city, multiplying the list of competitors for the labor in demand, and threatening a correspondent reduction in the rates of wages, the evil will re-appear, nay, go on increasing in future years; and poverty, with its miseries, grow apace in our midst. It is a painful foreboding; nor do I find it relieved on turning to the signs betokening,—widely I fear,—an altered state of habits with the poor and laboring classes. There is a visibly growing recklessness among them. The temperance reform that was late working, it was hoped, benign and lasting changes in their condition, has been arrested and turned back, in Boston certainly. The rapid recovery of multitudes of individuals, not to say whole masses of society, from the fatal spell of the intoxicating cup, a recovery so marvellous, wrought, as affirmed, by the genius of Washingtonianism a few years since, and which seemed to bring back the age of miracles, proves, alas, no marvel at all. Observation shows by a multitude

* In one of our city wards, as I was informed by the Overseer of the Poor for that district, among 200 families that applied for relief in the month of January, there were ascertained to be as many men, strong and able-bodied, at that time destitute of employment. The investigations of the same gentleman satisfied him that there were at least one hundred more in like condition in the self same ward — an estimate, he it observed, confined to the adult part of the male population, and not reckoning the great number of females there are elsewhere, either wanting occupation, or working, (if seamstresses, for example,) for most inadequate compensations.

of facts, that the changes were mostly transient and spasmodic. Stirring appeals, importunate solicitations, the force of sympathy, the lures of popularity and excitement, combined with motives applied to the lower and selfish instincts of human nature — these prevailed with very many to consent to the sudden relinquishment of intoxicating drinks, and publicly to subscribe to the Temperance Pledge. But the stability counted upon by those apparent reforms in the case of old inebriates, was for the most part delusive. The result demonstrated, as aforetime, the difficulty and uncertainty, though not the absolute impossibility, of such attempted conversions — the hazard, at all times, of putting new wine into old bottles.

I do not mean to say that exceptions, noble exceptions, were not found, — men regenerated and disenthralled by the agencies referred to and raised from the lowest stages of drunkenness; men restored to society, and who stood forth, as still they stand, among its useful and exemplary members. But, exceptions they are to the rule; and truth compels the assertion yet more, that a great error was committed in judgment and fact by the old Temperance Reformers, veterans in the service, men of character and approved sobriety, men of wisdom, weight and experience, when they left the cause, which they had so long and heroically advocated, in a great measure to their new and raw allies, — recruits just lifted from out of the slough of drunkenness, whose steadfastness was quite problematical, a thing to be yet verified, and whose self-confidence in the outset was more apparent than their modesty or their discretion. “If the blind lead the blind,” we know what must follow; and it requires no great sagacity to predict the likely consequence, if the office be

undertaken by the purblind and short-sighted, guides whose filmy eyes are but imperfectly couched, and whose mental and moral organs of perception are in that transition stage of clearing so well described by another, who "saw men as trees walking."

My observations go to show that little dependence is to be placed, as I conceive, on personal reformatations in subjects of old bad habits, for example, the cases of hardened inebriates, by the operation of the lesser motives, mere worldly or prudential considerations, presented to the mind of a man. To be made sure and permanent, they must be based on higher ground, deep principles of moral responsibility, and fixed solemn convictions of religious obligation. And here, I apprehend, opens up to the minister at large an important branch of his usefulness. His province is not confined to mere friendly visitations in the dwellings of the poor, or the carrying a welcome alms ever and anon, to the abodes of penury. He should regard himself as their spiritual adviser, a moral and religious teacher and guide; an office not to be borne magisterially, but in meekness and Christian love; one, likewise, not to be restricted to the place of worship, but exercised from house to house, in the workshop and elsewhere, wherever he may gain the ear of those whom, if erring, he would seek to reclaim to the paths of virtue. He should strive to lift the fallen by raising the sunken *soul* of a man within him, and to plant it upon a rock, the Christian's hope, the only foundation of strength and solidity. In dealing with the stubborn, he will choose of course to persuade and haply *allure* to the side of right; but if need be, he will be bold to "speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority." He

must endeavor to reach and penetrate the heart, by quickening appeals to the sanctions of DIVINE LAW. His aim, in a word, should be the conversion, (and nothing less,) the conversion of a transgressor's *soul*, his *whole* soul, *unto* God. Any change short of this, will remain radically imperfect; as any reform in the outward life, to wit, the repression of some old vice,— unless influenced by high religious motives, a heartfelt conscience towards God, is always to be suspected: it is a thing of weakness, essentially unstable, dependent on contingency and bare circumstance.

As already hinted, the sin of intemperance is by no means, I hold, to be discharged from the inebriate's self, and laid exclusively upon the shoulders of others. The language of some would imply, nevertheless, that it is solely to be placed to the latter account, the guilty agency of dealers in intoxicating poisons, or dealers and producers combined. Yet, whilst protesting on the one hand against such partial judgment, an awful responsibility on the other, I do verily believe, lies at the door of all them who directly or indirectly feed and pander to the dreadful vice of intemperance. The paltry gains of shillings and dollars, oh, what are they weighed side by side the fearful consequences thence entailed? They are besmeared, foully besmeared with the blood of souls, which the lust of such unhallowed gains has helped to ruin. And who that calculates the more proximate evils caused by facilities in the means of indulgence, who that reflects on the miseries and crimes, the poverty, wretchedness, maladies, deaths, thereby occasioned, must not feel that in being accessory to the drunkard's vice and the drunkard's degradation, a man must expect in righteous retribution to share in

the drunkard's doom? Is that man a good *citizen* who, for selfish ends, well knowing the tremendous mischiefs entailed, not in families and individuals alone, but society at large, by reason of the heavy public burdens demanded for the maintenance of jails and almshouses, besides other institutions chiefly tenanted by the victims and slaves of the cruel scourge now exposed,—is that man a good citizen, I ask, (to put the offence on its lowest grounds,) who, with these facts in mind, deliberately pursues a traffic that enriches himself at the spoil of the community, trusting at the same time to the shield of its laws, both to protect him in his business and guard his unholy gains?

The number of those embarked in such employments,—the number consequently of seductive haunts opened in the city, as so many snares and pitfalls laid in the paths of the weak and unwary of every age,—is great and fast multiplying. An exact estimate has not been made. The most authentic data for calculation are furnished in a manuscript report which I have had the privilege of consulting, submitted on the 1st of January last, by the City Marshal to the Mayor and Aldermen. I find from that paper, that this intelligent officer reckons the number of liquor dealers in Boston at eight hundred and fifty.* What a fearful picture is here offered for contem-

* His list is as follows;

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Distillers, | 9 |
| 2. Importers and Wholesale Dealers, | 70 |
| 3. Open Bar-rooms, | 200 |
| 4. Retailers, to be carried away, | 158 |
| 5. Low Tippling Shops, | 413 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 850 |

Mr. Marshal Gibbs annexes this comment;—"I have been at some pains to obtain the number of places where liquor is sold in Boston,

plation ! *Eight hundred and fifty* fountains and streams opened in the midst, — nay, some of them rivers and gulfs, ever replenished with the waters of death, these pouring their fiery floods through all our streets, surging, as it were, to the door-sill of every habitation ! Whose is the heart that should not be tremblingly moved by a spectacle like this ? And in view of the appalling desolations caused thereby, should not the watchmen on the walls of our Jerusalem lift up their voice like a trumpet to “show the people their transgressions, and the House of Israel their sins ?” It is an unwelcome conviction forced upon me, that the public mind is fast lapsing into heedlessness, a growing alarming apathy, with respect to the tremendous evils in their social aspects, the moral abominations, in a word, the manifold collective mischiefs brooding in our midst, from the abounding iniquity, the spreading curse of intemperance. May it be roused, speedily and thoroughly aroused, from such sad lethargy ! And may the wise and good of every class, Christian philanthropists, the friends of sound morals of every sect and name, unite their efforts in a common crusade against this

yet it is impossible to get a correct list, as in some of the dwelling houses occupied by the Irish, nearly every family sell it to some extent. Yet I give the statement, as near as the officers of the different routes have been able to obtain it.”

A startling remark occurs on another page of the document ; viz. that “our Police Court Reports show conclusively, that there is more liquor drank *upon the Sabbath* than any other day in the week.” What a mournful perversion of a day designed by the respite from toil for a season of sacred rest to all, but especially to serve as the poor man’s blessing ; a day so well described by the good Bishop Porteous, as “the bulwark of poverty against the encroachments of capital.”

direst foe of man, till our city be purged from so foul a pest, and its moral redemption be completely achieved and made sure !

I had designed to speak of the wretched accommodations for the shelter and occupancy of the poor in this city ; an evil, taken in connexion with the exorbitancy of the rents, than which nothing struck me with more painful surprise in the earlier walks of my ministry. My Report, however, has been drawn out to such length, that I am admonished to forbear on this head. I do it the more willingly as the subject, I find, is beginning to attract a measure of public solicitude. A recent writer in one of our leading journals* has presented some vigorous thoughts on this subject, well calculated to impress and awaken. An experiment, you are aware, has been made with encouraging success in the south part of the city, to construct comfortable tenements for the poor, at comparatively low yet remunerative prices of rent. An inspection of their condition shows, that in return for considerate treatment from the landlord, the lodgers are careful to guard his rights of property ; and after a tenancy of a year or more, no injury, beyond unavoidable wear, has been done the premises, at least none from wilful defacement, or culpable carelessness and neglect. Improvements, no doubt, might be made upon the plan and finish of the structure I speak of ; and these we may expect to see carried out by the enterprising proprietor, in a new erection which, it is said, he contemplates. Meanwhile, for what he has attempted, and in part accomplished, I

* See a valuable article with an editorial, in the Daily Advertiser of February, copied into the Tribune and Christian Register,—the last under date of the 21st inst.

regard him as a public benefactor. I am encouraged to hope that the good example he has set will be followed up more extensively by some others of our wealthy and benevolent capitalists, and that an effort will soon be made to meet effectually this want, the great and crying want of the poor of our city, for better lodgment and homes. It is a measure which, in a financial point of view, may commend itself to favor, as good tenements will command good tenants; and, contrarily, the wealth of a community must eventually be taxed for the disease and suffering, aye, and the very vice and crime produced by the abandonment and degradation of unsheltered, out-cast indigence.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I beg to offer you my thanks for the aid and kindly countenance which you have lent me the year past, in the discharge of the duties of my humble ministry; and in presenting this, my first Annual Report, I have pleasure in subscribing myself, with great respect,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

ANDREW BIGELOW.

Boston, March 26, 1846.

Mr. Cruft was appointed as Minister at Large, on the 1st of February, 1846. He has therefore had opportunity for little more than to lay out his plans of operation. After speaking of the discouraging aspect of his particular sphere at the Suffolk Street Chapel, he writes as follows:—

MR. CRUFT'S REPORT.

* * * But there are encouraging tokens in the strong faith, the fervid zeal on the part of the families that still remain, that the interests of the Chapel shall yet prosper again. I feel grateful for the hearty sympathy, the warm co-operation, the ever ready welcome to their homes and hearts, I have uniformly found. They are ready to do all in their power to support the interests of religion, and in accordance with their means I believe they do more than most societies. The Sunday School, under the same faithful superintendence, considering the obstacles it has to contend against, in the drainings made by the neighboring societies, may be said to be doing quite well. There are connected with it at present twenty-one Teachers, and about one hundred pupils. We have promise of additions to the ranks of both with the opening season. The Bible class under the direction of Mr. Winckley is in a flourishing condition, and hold weekly meetings in addition to the one upon the Sabbath. The Sixth Anniversary of the School was held on the second Sunday of February, when appropriate addresses were delivered to the children, parents and teachers, by Rev. Messrs. Robbins and Clarke, and by the Pastor. The Chapel was well filled notwithstanding the severity of the weather, and a renewed stimulus was given to the interests of the school.

The Chapel Choir, which on my first coming was in rather a languishing condition, has recently been resuscitated by securing the services of its former efficient leader, Mr. Volney Wilder. This is done by the voluntary contributions of the worshippers, who still continue

to meet, I think, all the current expenses of the Chapel, with the exception of the Pastor's salary.

The average attendance upon public worship during the past quarter, as I have before remarked, has been about one hundred; it may be less than that in the forenoons from reason of the isolated position of the Chapel, it being more inaccessible perhaps than any other place of worship in the city. With the already improving weather and walking the numbers have encouragingly multiplied. New families have taken pews, and some that left in the "troubles" have returned again, while there are still others in this brief period, that have left by removal into other sections of the city, so fluctuating is the poor population in this neighborhood, which I believe is more or less their characteristic everywhere. But the attendance upon public worship at the Chapel is by no means a criterion of the extent and influence of the minister's labors. Many are detained there-from by an irresistible pressure of circumstances. Sickness, age, infirmity, want of suitable apparel, the cares of a numerous family, with other such causes, are continually preventing the pastor from beholding the whole flock gathered in his fold. The ministry for such is, day by day around their firesides and homes, to their places of toil, to their haunts it may be of dissipation and sin.

The number of families I have become acquainted with as connected with the Chapel, most of whom I have visited at least twice, is in the range of ninety. In connexion with the other duties of my office, I have made during the two months since the confirmation of my appointment over two hundred calls.

In addition to the services on the Sabbath, there are

Teachers' Meetings held once a fortnight, which are attended with interest, and it is to be hoped, profit. There is also the Lady's Sewing Circle, which holds its meetings once a fortnight, and oftener as occasion shall require, — the object of which is to afford clothing to such as may be in need, as well as to subserve the purposes of a truer social fellowship. There is, besides, the monthly meeting for the members of the Church, which is open to all who may be religiously inclined. We have also just established conference meetings for the exposition of scriptures and free conversation upon them, to be held every week at the houses of the members of the society, in the different sections of the neighborhood, so that all may partake in their benefits, and be more closely bound, each to each — those black dividing lines of caste and sect be wiped away, that do too extensively prevail in the community, and from which I do not find even the poor to be exempt. By superinducing thus the religious upon the social culture, or rather making the two go hand in hand, we augur much good, and hope and pray the spiritual interests of all may be better promoted.

But another of the meetings of hopeful interest that have recently been formed amongst us, I must not forget to mention, viz: the Sewing Circle for Young Misses, established and conducted by the unwearied zeal, worthy of all commendation, of some of our ladies. Besides uniting them in more friendly and agreeable bonds, the design is to instil into their young minds the truer principles of economy and thrift, save them from vice by giving them a refuge from idleness, and afford them the means in after-life, as occasion may demand, of procuring an honest livelihood. The meetings are held once a

week, on Wednesday, P. M., and children of the poor are invited in from all the neighborhood around. Their numbers have increased beyond the most sanguine expectations. They have already reached to fifty, and are still upon the increase.

Thus much would I say concerning the Chapel. It will be seen that I have dwelt somewhat at length upon its condition, for I have felt that this were called for by its friends at a distance, especially by those of the Benevolent Fraternity. The Chapel with its ministry has had much to contend against. Dark clouds have hung around its path, as they still do hang, but we would fain hope to behold the bow of promise there; and guided by its light, cheered by the prayers of the *working* friends of that ministry, and assisted by the grace of God, we hope yet to see it conducted to more prosperous issues.

But the ministry to which I have been called is one more extended than that of the Chapel. It is one not bounded by the circumference of its partial interests. It is a ministry at large. This, as it has been my hope, so also has it been my joy and reward to prosecute. And so I pray it may ever continue to be. This ministry I have felt to be one that must penetrate into the lowest depths of the community. Wheresoever is the abode made desolate by the passions of man, wheresoever is sin of any description to be tracked into its hiding place, and be brought to the light, that its deeds may be made manifest and reprov'd; wheresoever the mourner is to be lifted from the dust, and words of blessed comfort to be spoken; wheresoever the sick and dying are to be prayed with and cheered; wheresoever heart-rending distress is to be alleviated; a kind word of advice

to be spoken, a warm greeting of fellowship to be given; wheresoever in fine the blessed gospel of Jesus can be applied to enlighten, to purify, to elevate, to bless mankind, there the minister at large must be, there is his peculiar province of action. And where can a nobler, a diviner one be found on the face of the earth? He labors for some good purpose then. He is at home then; at home with Jesus, the friend of the friendless, the savior of the lost, who "came to seek and to save that which was lost," at home with the angels who joy over the humble penitent. The sainted presence of Tuckerman visits him then, and the world's godlike benefactors of the past and present stand round, a cloud of cheering witnesses.

And the subjects of such a varied ministry are not all found to be connected with places of public worship. So circumstanced they frequently are, that had they the will they could not find the way. The minister at large then is to find them out, and to succor their necessities, or he is false to his charge, recreant to the principles on which the ministry is founded.

Such have been my thoughts concerning the ministry, such the results of my short experience thus far. Such cases as these I have already become cognizant of. In attending to which, I have felt I was truly carrying out the purposes for which I received the appointment of minister at large.

I have dwelt longer upon this head than I designed, as I desired to have my present position more fully understood, having heard in some quarters that I had been appointed exclusively to the ministry of the Suffolk Street Chapel, that I should confine my visits only to the wor-

shippers there, should seek in other words to make it an independent Chapel, in the course of time to take its stand with the other regularly incorporated societies of the city. I can only answer that I came not and was sent not with any such intent. Belonging to no sect myself, I would desire not to affix any sectarian character to the Chapel. It was erected especially in reference to the poor; and to that class I feel peculiarly bound, even as it is my pleasure, to minister and preach the gospel. From a cursory observation thus far I should say, the time had not yet arrived for thus transforming the character of the Chapel. There are poor enough yet left in this part of the city to be provided for, though so rapidly it is growing. New and handsome edifices are indeed going up all around, but a good portion of these are building on hitherto vacant lots. There is not that demolition of poorer tenements to make way for costlier ones, as in the other more settled portions of the city. Houses for the poor still remain and are to be had at cheaper rents than elsewhere. Crowded out of its other parts the poor must flock here for shelter. Tenements must and will be erected especially for them, as has already been done, which, besides paying a handsome interest on the cost, will do much to ameliorate the physical and consequently the moral and spiritual condition of those of whom the Son of Man has said, they "shall be always with us." I cannot but hope that the praiseworthy example of him who built that model house in Dedham street, (already I think referred to in one of your previous reports,) may be followed far and wide by others, and that the poor may henceforth be more comfortably housed, and no longer only kennelled and stabled.

I have been indeed somewhat surprised in my walks to find that many of the new blocks of houses that have recently gone up, with goodly and even attractive exteriors, which the beholder would at once set down as containing families well to do in the world, and which the minister to the poor, at first sight, would pass by as containing no object of his search, that these very houses contained often their two, three, and even perhaps four families, forced thus together by the iron pressure of poverty, dependent on the charities of others, sheep without a shepherd.

In order better to discover such, more especially to find out those unconnected with any place of religious worship, I have adopted the plan, as I have gone about on my walks, to inquire into every dwelling, if there were any children within who were not connected with any Sunday School, and were desirous to attend one. If there were any such, I took immediate measures for their attendance either at our own, or wheresoever the parents might express an honest preference. The all-important matter of the religious instruction of the young, the importance of instilling virtuous principles into their now so ductile and impressible hearts, is irresistibly pressed home upon me with every day's observation. Indeed, who is there, what parent is there, who can read the more recent records of our Police Court, and observe what a frightful increase there is of cases of juvenile delinquency and profligacy, and not feel alarmed for the future prosperity of his city; not feel that something is to be done, and that speedily, to put a moral bulwark around the rising generation that shall keep forever out the devouring pestilence walking

in darkness around. I have faith that such a bulwark may be found in our Sabbath Schools, properly conducted, and would ever give them my warm sympathy and co-operation.

But I have had another object in view in the prosecution of this plan. Such inquiries have paved the way for an intercourse with the elder members, the parents and heads of the family. They have helped me to lift the veil from off their moral and religious, as well as social and domestic condition. I have been thus enabled to ascertain how many there were not connected with any places of public worship, and to urge them to attend at our own Chapel, or to introduce them to the ministry of any other denomination as they might signify and desire. And notwithstanding the number of religious societies in the neighborhood of differing beliefs, thereby affording no excuse to any for neglecting the house of God, I have been surprised to find how many families there were not attending anywhere, and with a sanctuary too, perhaps, right at their very door-step. Here is a mission in itself ample enough to repay the hopeful and diligent laborer with abundant fruit; a most important one too, as helping to remove very many evils and sins that too manifestly arise from Sabbath breaking.

Of course I have had as yet but little time to develop this or my other plans for the better success of this ministry. The great ocean of its benevolence is forever stretching out more and more boundless before me, while I have but just come upon the shore and have gathered but a few pebbles as yet. I pray God for strength to do something in the work, though a whole lifetime would not suffice to do it all. My contemplated removal to a

new dwelling of my own, that will bring me more into the centre of the circumference of my ministerial labors, will add, I trust, to the number and frequency of my visits, and make me a more efficient agent in the cause your kindness has assigned to me, and upon which I would now and ever invoke the best of Heaven's benedictions.

Respectfully,

SAMUEL B. CRUFT.

Boston, March 26, 1846,

MR. BURTON'S REPORT.

Rev. Mr. Burton, in accordance with a vote of the Central Board, has devoted a considerable portion of his time to an investigation of the vice of Licentiousness, as it exists in our city. He has given the results of his labors in a long and faithful Report; and they are of the most startling and alarming character, awakening the deepest anxiety for the morals of the community, and plainly showing that it is high time to cast aside indifference and silence, and put forth active and strenuous exertions to save our city and our homes from this horrible corruption. Mr. Burton has examined the whole extent of this vice, searched it out in all its secret places, and laid bare its awful consequences. He has collected his facts from his own observation, from the police, physicians, and responsible individuals of every class; and the result at which he ar-

rives is, that this monstrous evil exists among us to an extent which few have imagined — that it is rapidly bringing the morals of our city in this respect to the low level which obtains in other large cities of our country. For obvious reasons, it would not be advisable to give publicity to all the painful details, which Mr. Burton, with unwearied labor and perseverance, has sought out and presented to the Board. It could be of no possible utility in a Report like this, and might be productive of much evil. It is enough to know upon evidence, that can be offered, evidence in the possession of responsible men, that this great sin, this source of moral pollution, this low and degrading vice, which destroys both body and soul, is fearfully prevalent among us; that it has made deep inroads upon the high character we have hitherto held; that it has left its dark stain upon all classes, and both sexes. Scattered in various parts of our city, Mr. Burton tells us, are houses of ill repute of every grade, from those of respectable appearance in respectable quarters, to those of mean and low exteriors; from the quiet house, wholly unsuspected, in honorable neighborhoods, to the noisy and riotous cellar, openly devoted to evil purposes; from the elegantly furnished, “where wealth, in stooping to its lusts, may experience no jar upon its refinements;” to the wretched and squalid apartments, where the lowest enjoy their revels. Some of the largest and most expensive are owned by their keepers, though most are hired, in some instances it is painful to say, of owners for avowedly licentious purposes, at an exorbitant rent. Though it is but justice, as Mr. Burton says, to observe, “that many employ agents to lease their estates, who probably are the recipients of the extra premium, the owners being alto-

gether ignorant of the abominable uses to which their property has been put."

Mr. Burton also draws attention particularly to assignation houses, which, he says, in some instances are occupied permanently by as many only as are needed for care. Many of them are large, and conducted with all outward decorum. Perfect quiet is observed, to insure which no intoxicating liquors are allowed, and none received as visitors but *married men*. Besides these, there are others of very humble, down to the very lowest exteriors. And, it is said, there are persons who ostensibly have other avocations and are otherwise apparently virtuous, who yet accommodate with rooms to add to their gains or eke out a scanty livelihood. It is fearful to think how many such private meeting places may be scattered every where. They present a phasis of this subject which is full of the most alarming conjectures, and demands the most thorough investigation; particularly when it is added that many females resort to these places who would not, on any account, be known to enter houses of a more public character. With such facts before us, can the virtuous of the community continue inactive and listless? Will they not demand that some stringent measures be taken to search out and lay bare these secret haunts of corruption, so seductive to the weak principled, and so fatal because of their secrecy?

If it be asked how are these places supplied with their wretched inmates? It must be answered, there are found those in every class of the unprotected and exposed, who, either from their want of proper moral training, from their own depravity, from that corrupting vanity, the love of dress; from natural indolence, shunning laborious tasks, and

from those engaged in the various manual employments, exposed to the arts of the dissolute, or whose hard services are inadequately rewarded, are ready to gratify their vanity or their indolence, or multiply their resources, even at the costly price of their virtue. Mr. Burton strongly insists, "that the love of dress is too often the medium of the guilt of very many. It is well known that the pay of laboring females in cities is comparatively small. They see fashion and splendor flaunting in the streets. They long to do the same, to display, be seen and admired. They dream not of bartering their virtue, but there are always ways enough for artful men to get an acquaintance with such, and by representations of brilliant rewards, allure them to their ruin." Many also are led away by a first fatal step, in an undue reliance on the fair promises of a supposed honorable friend. They find their reputation gone, their hopes cruelly crushed, society closed against them, and with a reckless spirit they rush into deeper degradation and infamy. Let a fearful retribution wait the deceiver, the greater criminal!

Many, also, who come from the villages and country towns alone and ignorant of the snares that are laid for them, by men whose chief business it is to seek and delude such, are mis-directed, misled, and at last fall into the toils. It is said that the State of Maine, in this manner, furnishes a large proportion of the abandoned females in our city. They leave their homes, pure and unharmed, to seek employment here, where their labor is most in demand, to enter domestic service, to pursue any of the occupations which may be offered to their industry. They find themselves alone, without a friend to consult or direct, amid all the bewilderments of a crowded city,

wholly unpractised in the ways of the world. They are ready to yield to the direction of any who shall seem to take an interest in them, and thus they are often ignorantly seduced from the paths of rectitude and purity. There are those who are always waiting to allure and delude such unprotected ones, at the landings of steamboats, railroad stations, intelligence offices, and other places where they may be found. Indeed, there are persons employed for these very purposes. A superintendent at one of the depots in the city informed Mr. Burton, that he had frequently reprimanded this class of men, and taken opportunity to direct females thus endangered, to reputable boarding-houses. He stated that in the course of the year a great many such cases occurred. This fact ought to be made known, that parents may never allow their daughters to come thus unguarded from their quiet homes, into the bustle, confusion and temptations of a city. Let them make every sacrifice that need be, to attend them hither, see them well provided for, respectably placed in families or respectable boarding-houses, and provided with some sure and trusty friend, who shall be their guardian and guide in the new and strange place. Above all, let them be careful to implant deep religious principles and convictions in the hearts of their children, without which they should have the saddest apprehensions for their safety.

Such are a few of the sources whence the abandoned are derived. Mr. Burton in his Report, describing the fearful and rapid degradation of these females, says:—“The inmates of these houses lead a changeful and miserable life, and this generally growing worse and worse, until they come to an early death. I will indicate the course of a female I was requested to find, as an illustra-

tion for her class. She was seduced in Providence, and at length got into one of the largest brothels in Boston; was there a kept mistress, quarrelled with her keeper, was got into the care of the Moral Reform Society, insulted them and broke from their control; at midnight sought shelter at a small house of ill fame, was there sick, recovered; was conducted to perhaps the most genteel and costly establishment in the city; staid there two weeks, and almost at the very moment of going to the theatre in a magnificent dress, had a letter put into her hands, informing her that her mother was dying, and begged her to come home. She burst into tears, exclaiming that she had killed her mother; then almost cursed that parent because she had not brought her up better; was taken away and sent to her mother; staid with her only three or four days; left her just on the verge of the grave, and is supposed to have returned to Boston, where if she can be found, she is to receive the intelligence that her mother has at length died, expressing in her last moments the utmost anxiety concerning her course. But a mother's living or dying anxieties, monitions or prayers will probably have no effect. She will not go back. She will go on and down until she shall soon come to her last bed, and in the bewildering agonies of death cry out for her dead mother, the mother she has killed, to come from the grave and save her." Similar to this, every hope crushed, and the heart, that was once innocent and happy, blackened by guilt and driven into frenzy by the upbraidings of an awakened conscience, is the end of these unhappy females. Would that those who have aided in their ruin could be forced to witness the fearful death

scene, and know themselves guilty, and the weight of their own retribution.

Mr. Burton also draws attention, in earnest language, to the enormous abuses generated in the Third Row of the National Theatre. "In pursuance of your wishes," he says, "that I should make all possible inquiry in respect to the morals of the city, I have visited this place in person. I went in openly, with free admission, as an avowed missionary, and in company with the City Marshal. There for the first time I saw what indecencies and open preliminaries to vice of every sort, this city pays its authorities somewhat to restrain, but will not permit them to annihilate. There were individuals apparently from all classes, in company with the degraded female. There I saw a fine looking boy in spencer and cap, and to appearance of the most genteel rank, in the company of a very young girl, with a sort of air as if she was his habitual mistress. I saw them go out together and disappear. Can that boy's parents tell whither they went?" If we are to be subject to the evils of dramatic entertainment in the opening of a new theatre of a more respectable and attractive character, it is to be most fervently desired that the Municipal authorities will see to it most carefully, that no place within its walls shall be devoted, as in times past, to the lowest iniquity, intemperance and vice; none set apart and known as the resort of the dissolute of both sexes. If we must have them, at least let them be free from open solicitations to infamy, which have ever been their dark stain and deep curse in every community.

In pursuing his investigations, Mr. Burton has also found painful evidence that the vice of licentiousness has even entered and violated the sanctity of home, and de-

stroyed the fidelity and purity of the domestic relations. Adultery on the part of females, though not common, yet prevails to an extent not in the least suspected by the community in general. Attempts also to destroy the evidence of guilt are frequent and increasing.

But to pass from this part of the sad history ; who, it may be asked, are those who visit the houses of ill-repute, and are guilty of this vice among the male portion of the community ? Mr. Burton, in answer, finds them to be individuals from every rank and condition. It is not confined to the grossly dissolute, men whose characters are well known, and in consequence are separated from respectable society. It is not a vice to be found only among the ignorant and unrefined, or among those peculiarly exposed through want of care and proper training, or those who know not the moral iniquity of loosing the reins of passion and appetite. It is the characteristic of no class above another. It is a lamentable truth that the guilty may be found in all the ranks of society ; among young men and old men, single and married, rich and poor. “ There is the young clerk who takes first from his own pocket money to purchase his initiation into the school of lust, and then robs his master’s desk for means to higher degrees. And when he comes to mastership and capital of his own, he can scoop from the daily currency of business, and nobody can question for what. There are such masters. I have seen the youth of sixteen, or the boy of apparently twelve, in the employ of such, and of course, ready to fall into the same infamy for aught of precept or example from him in whose service he is engaged. There is the apprentice at a mechanical trade ; he will overtask himself at extra work

for gains to pay the cost of iniquity. Such at least are the confessions to me of some of the reformed. Next, there is the largely doing merchant, the gainful professional man, and the droning inheritor of parental earnings. There is the boy of fifteen, who climbs up after such examples, or rather gropes and dares his way *down* after them. There are also hundreds in the towns of the vicinity who frequent the city. Then there is the considerable, perhaps inconsiderable business man from the country. Finally, there are the compeers, I mean the character-compeers of all these profligates, whose appearance is truly somewhat different, namely, rags and drunkenness. Let it not be understood, that in thus indicating the classes in which the guilty may be found, I would cast reproach on the classes themselves. All I would convey is, the extent of this contagion and that from each of these ranks and conditions, there are individuals who frequent the haunts of licentiousness. And the testimony of physicians and others, whose vocations lead to an acquaintance with the vice and its subjects, compels us to believe that the number is painfully great. You would be astonished, they say, to know how many are guilty and who they are."

We know not that Mr. Burton has stated the prevalence of this vice in too broad terms. Care should be taken to observe the qualification he makes. He does not represent all classes as guilty, but says only that the guilt is not chargeable upon any one above another. He would only awaken us to greater activity in this matter, by disclosing the painful fact, that this vice is working its way into the very heart of the city, and that neither rank, or wealth, or the pride of a good reputation, does with-

stand and overcome its corrupting influence. Nay, not even always the holy obligations of matrimony; for it is a most painful truth, sustained by undoubted evidence, that adultery on the part of married men is far from infrequent. That men, with wife and children, with happy homes, and all the enjoyments and sanctities of the domestic ties, should yet be shamelessly false to the trusting reliance of affection, and deeply perjured in the breaking of their marriage oaths by guiltiness in this heinous crime, should bring ruin upon themselves and into their families by the fearful retributions of their sin, is what only the sad, yet ample testimony of physicians and others could lead us to believe. It is a most melancholy truth, and calls for the deepest reprobation.

What then, if all this be true, and with such authority as we have, no one can doubt it, what then can be done to stay its course and dry up its fountains? This is a most difficult question. The whole subject is involved in great difficulty. Yet something, and something equal to the emergency, must be done and speedily. No feeling of delicacy should prevent its being discussed and practicably dealt with. It has been let alone already too long. It should have its opponents, strong and powerful as those who stand up against intemperance, or any other evil and crime. Why should it not? It is a loathsome subject indeed; but because of its loathsome and deadly effects, should it be only the more urgently opposed to its entire eradication. It has been endeavored to destroy it by silence. But no sin has been so destroyed, and this has formed no exception. It has held its own, if it has not, as some have supposed, fearfully increased among us. What precisely should be done, the Committee are

not fully agreed upon, nor does it fall within the line of their appropriate duties specially to prosecute this subject. It is sufficient for them to have called the public attention to this dreadful vice. A few suggestions from the Report can alone be offered.

“The first requisite,” says Mr. Burton, “towards the correction of licentiousness, I deem to be this, a strong, unwavering, philosophic, Christian faith, that it can be corrected, that the evil can be removed. Let us have hope; let us have faith, faith in humanity, faith in the triumphant mission of Christ, faith in the promises and helpful blessings of Almighty God.” Let us never cease to believe that man can be lifted from this iniquity, and become pure of the great transgression; that he can lay a firm restraint upon his passions and unholy appetites, and make them obedient to the laws of righteousness and holiness; that he can and will see the deep degradation, the dark iniquity, the fearful corruption of this horrible vice, the miseries it entails on body and soul, the woes it brings upon once happy households, and with a shudder turn from it, and pass away. Let us have faith that the fearful warnings and threatenings in God’s word against this vice, shall be heard, till every heart shall tremble at the present peril and the final retribution. But while we cherish this faith, something remains for us to do. “The time has fully come,” says Mr. Burton, “for this evil to be talked of, discussed, and thoroughly understood. Let it be exposed in its economical bearings and physiological effects, with all logical connection and clearness. Let its social consequences be portrayed with all the pathos of compassionate eloquence, and all its moral turpitude be set before the deadened conscience, till it shall be quickened and

made to tremble, if not repent." Let municipal authority be clothed with greater power to search out and break up all places of ill repute. Let it exert all it has, faithfully and thoroughly, and what more shall be needed let it be granted. Let neighborhoods not be deterred from any feeling of false delicacy from ridding themselves of the vicinity of such houses. By combinations, by representations and exposures, by all means that can be devised, let them free themselves from the corrupting influence which such houses always spread around them; nor let them give over till the horrid nuisance be abated. "Let the haunts of sin be searched out, made known and marked. But here we may be met by the plea, that this publishing of localities will direct those thereto who might otherwise be safe. No such thing. Whoever has any inclination for bad houses most readily find them. This ought to have been proclaimed in parental ears long ago, and the cry of warning kept in their hearing continually. But there is no danger in seeking out and making known for purposes of reform; if so, it shall be quickly over by the very efficacy of this reform. The danger is rather in the concealment, the stillness and the lull of virtuous suspicion. Would that woman also knew her danger, could see her interest, could feel her power, and would do all her duty. Let her while she casts off, if she will, the lost of her own sex, reserve the weight of her indignation for the profligate who caused their ruin. Let her demand purity in life as the title of admission to her society; let her be as rigidly just towards the depravity of man as she has been cruelly unjust towards the deceived and the fallen of her own sex, and no future pen shall find material for such a document as this. Again,

I say, let the abodes of infamy be found out. Let Christian men and women *will* it and it shall be done. Thereby shall profligate man be kept from going thither ; but still further, miserable females may be brought therefrom and some of them at least reformed and saved. Let them be placed in virtuous families or in asylums established for the purpose. There is already one in the city, and munificence should build more as penitence may need or philanthropy shall ask for them. Furthermore, let masters and mistresses give a hearty sympathy, and lend a various care to those who depend upon them and look to them for counsel and direction ; let them acquaint themselves with their habits and places of resort, not by a cold espionage, but from an honest interest in them, and an urgent desire for their protection and the purity of their reputation. There are other methods ; one is, the right education of the young. Let sons and daughters, both at home and at school, be scrupulously guarded from all impure ideas, as they are carefully protected from burns and scalds upon the sensitive flesh. Let our public schools be visited with a severer scrutiny in respect to causes of impurity, than they have been in respect to intellectual defects. Let such books as would in the least excite evil thoughts and feelings be cast away as speedily as if they were found to hide a plague or speedy death between the leaves. Above all, cultivate the holiest love, the love of God, and let this flow down and sanctify all inferior affections." Let the moral iniquity of this vice be pressed upon the mind of the young. It is the young that are the most exposed and the most generally guilty. Let them be protected by all possible defences ; especially let them be made to feel as strongly as may be, the

moral delinquency into which he falls who commits the great offence ; that it is not a failing, a fault, a peculiarity of disposition, but always and wholly a deep and fearful *sin*, which admits of no excuse or palliation ; that it is a violation of a law of God's ordaining, which is never broken without its sure and speedy retributions ; a law against whose violation there stands written the most terrible condemnation in God's word and in his own deep soul.

More might be said ; but enough, it is hoped, has been presented to place this subject before the mind of this community. It cannot be that we shall rest in inaction with these facts pressing upon our attention. Earnestly do we pray that the investigation, whose results have now been stated, will be but the humble beginning of a mighty reform, which shall sweep away this iniquity in all its phases from among us for ever. Something *must* be done. Let the good of every name consult together *what* shall be done. And may God add his helpful blessings to all our labors.

MR. BARNARD'S REPORT.

Another year has rapidly flown away, and I have the pleasure of presenting the Annual Report of my service in the Ministry at Large.

The past twelve months have continued to present the usual extent and variety of offices and errands familiar to every minister at large. Among them all, none has occupied more of my time, or more of my thoughts and

interests, than those originating from and connected with cases of accident, illness, or death, among the people of my own charge, or those who have no other minister to call upon. The limits of my last Report permitted me merely to allude to this subject, and my mind, very naturally, has dwelt upon it through the year. Besides, the events of the year and the whole character of the ministry at large have conspired very greatly to increase and deepen my thoughts and impressions. And, with your permission, I will devote the present Report to this all important branch of our duties, as well as privileges, among our less favored fellow-men.

* * * In the commencement of my ministry with Dr. Tuckerman, I was most forcibly and delightfully impressed with the character of his visits to those who were disabled, or ill, or dying, as well as poor. No medical attendant could be more punctual, — no brother more kind, — no nurse more assiduous. He comprehended all the bearings of such seasons, momentous alike to rich and poor. He met them manfully and faithfully himself; he labored to have them met in the same way by his friends among the poor. All his charity towards them, while they lived, all his respect for them, when they were departed, evinced the depth and sincerity of that regard for human nature, that reverence for the great Physician, and that faithfulness to God, which fitted him so eminently for the work entrusted to him by his fellow men and his Heavenly Father. I need not say I learned a lesson that I shall never forget. My first desire was to share in such labors. It has ever been my highest ambition to render myself qualified for so noble a service. Observation and experience confirm and increase my conviction.

You will understand me better from a few facts; I take them from the events of the past year. During the year, my attention has been called to upwards of one hundred and fifty cases of illness, more or less severe, of longer or shorter duration, of every variety and condition—all of interest to myself, many of deepest moment to the world, could they arrest its attention, or appeal to its sensibilities. The number is larger than that of any preceding year of my ministry, not, perhaps, from any peculiarity in the seasons, or other physical and external cause, but because each added term of such service is accompanied by a rapidly increasing ratio of duties and privileges. The work in all its other branches grows upon me in the same way.

The details of a few cases may indicate the character of the whole. One of the earliest in the year, was that of a young woman whom I had met in trying circumstances several years before. She had then recently left the seclusion of her country home, and the happiness of her parents' presence. But the interval was long enough to make her a victim of the wrong and heartlessness of the city. She was more sinned against than sinning. There were many good traits about her still. Her sentiments and affections were by no means wholly perverted or destroyed. She was not deaf to all counsel. She was still susceptible of some good impressions, and to a certain extent would act according to our advice. If she wanted courage or strength to break through the toils and escape from the miseries of her lot, she was willing to part with her child, dear as he was to her, rather than detain him in such exposure. I subsequently officiated at her marriage, and for years rejoiced to see her living in com-

parative purity and peace. Injustice, privation, and adversity were still her portion. Death drew nigh. It found her without money, without friends, long wronged, and finally abandoned by her husband. The blow was suspended to leave time for a few offices of humanity, a few tones of sympathy, the Christian prayer, and the Christian farewell. What man would not rejoice in the privilege of ministering to such wants and at such an hour? Were we not to close her eyes, as if they were those of a sister? I waited in her dying room,—I attended her funeral,—I saw her interred at Mount Auburn, where her son, in future years, might find her grave, and my aim was to meet at least some of the claims which she had upon her more favored fellow-creatures in whose name, under God and Christ, I approached her; my desire was to lend to her last days on earth, in some humble measure, and with some faint reflection, the grace and consolation of that spirit which humility and penitence might soon make her own, in fullness and for ever, before the face of her Maker, and at her Redeemer's feet, which in life, a woman like herself had washed with her tears and wiped with the hairs of her head.

The next case was that of a young woman in equally humble circumstances, but with all the sunshine of a heart at ease with itself, and the world, and God: Lately married, and just entering upon the joys and duties of this new sphere, with all the promises afforded by the honor of her youth and the innocence of her childhood, she was suddenly arrested by the voice of the last messenger from God to man. She was ill, and must die. She heard the summons without alarm and prepared to depart with entire and cheerful resignation. Every pur-

pose and plan of this life were to be abandoned and forgotten. The ties of friendship, kindred and affection were to be severed, one after another. I was one of her friends. She had long been a pupil of my Sabbath School, and a member of my youthful congregation; and though absence from the city, or other circumstances, had afterwards somewhat separated us from each other; though, perhaps, family considerations, or her own more mature choice might have led her to a different view of religious doctrine; yet, when she returned to die in my neighborhood, she was right in looking to me for attention, and I could not but sincerely rejoice to pay it.

A little fruit, earlier or better than she could procure it, a jelly or other delicacy, occasional bouquets, a ride, when she was strong enough to bear it,—these, if you had ever desired them at such seasons for yourself, you could not but delight to make the tokens of your regard; and with them would come the best opportunities you could desire as a man and a Christian, for all other expressions of your sympathy and good will. To such offerings, slight in themselves, yet welcome to all in the days of illness, and most of all to the humble poor, you need but add your presence, your words, and your prayers, in harmony with your errand, and conscience will assure you that you are aiming, at least, to do unto others as you would that others should do unto you.

I was the more diligent to meet my obligations to this young friend in her departing days, because the more rapid decline of her own brother, also a former pupil and hearer, the year before, had prevented many services that I should have been happy to have rendered him. The church of her family was Calvinistic.

I turned from this tribute of affectionate remembrance to receive the parting smile and dying gift of another, who had long been waiting to be borne to the same resting-place. My steps had repeatedly turned to this chamber of sickness, but never without a welcome, never without an occasion, slight or serious, for some tokens of that love, human and divine, in whose sacred name I was sent; and never without a conviction that, could I but justly portray the scenes which I was thus permitted to admire, another step would be taken towards a union of the rich and poor, the strong and feeble, the living and the dying, that might fulfil the purposes of our Maker, and crown the mission of his Son.

A few brief hints are all that I can offer. Among my first visits with Dr. Tuckerman, was one to a family in which he took great interest, at a remote part of the city. I saw them often during his absence from Boston, or while I acted as his assistant. This was interrupted when another and separate district was assigned to my care. It ceased altogether, as my own more especial engagements were multiplied. Nearly fourteen years elapsed, but these early acquaintances did not pass from my mind. Memory recalled their humble abode, with the parents' faithfulness and trust, the children's innocence and smiles. Imagination followed their fortunes and pictured the fruits that it had reason to expect. Early last fall, one of the children who used to climb Dr. Tuckerman's knee, and share the good man's kiss, came to be married by me, out of regard of those distant visits. I met her at her own home afterwards; and found all my hopes realized. The promises of childhood were fulfilled; poverty had continued the portion of the family; death

and other afflictions had been added to their lot ; but their courage and faith were unabated, their exertions unrelaxed. Widowed, alone, and with advancing years, the mother might have fainted or sunk in the conflict, had not her daughters gathered around her for help and defence. My young friend, whose marriage I had solemnized, was the eldest, and had proved true to all the relations that might be associated with this fact. The first born of the household, she was the first to minister to its comforts and enjoyments ; the superior of her sisters in years, she had cherished an honorable ambition to be their leader in family cares and affections. Filial piety was her pervading spirit. Her self-sacrificing, self-forgetting devotion to her mother must have been acceptable in the sight of Heaven. Her frame was too feeble for her affection, and gave way beneath the toils and burdens exacted and imposed by her loyal and liberal heart. The world was not worthy of her. The sharp necessities of her lot, the stern realities, the evils and defects of the present social state, its inequality, indifference and injustice, were more than she had strength to bear. She was to die, another victim of the customs and competitions of society. Unpaid and unpitied exertions, incessant and ill requited toils, the disregards and wrongs of men, broke the spirit they could not bend. God saw the unequal struggle and removed her in mercy to a serener sky. Shall not we see it too, and watch and pray for a day of better things, a higher stage of civilization, a nearer approach to the kingdom of heaven on earth ? After her wedding, my friend attended church a few times. She was already in a decline, and, before long, kept her chamber altogether.

Industry and prudence had kept her and her mother above

actual want, yet, in all such seasons there are many gifts that it would be painful to feel were only to be found in the luxurious and wealthy rooms of illness. Choice fruit, an ice cream—any delicacy recurring to her fancy, a bunch of flowers, to her eyes, unvisited by false lights, the handiwork of God,—these and other offerings like them, might convey all that the occasion required, and be made to bear with them, in sincerity, every other expression of your sympathy, faith, and hope. His name, that gives new value to a cup of cold water, may consecrate alike the costliest or the cheapest gift, expected at our hands, by Heaven, whose are the opportunities, if not by our fellow-beings, whose are the necessities. No one could have asked, no one could have received less than this young woman did. Among the many instances of gratitude that have gladdened my way, none has been more spontaneous or heart-felt than hers. She partook of the Lord's Supper, at her own request, almost with her last breath. It was an hour upon which the brightness of a better world seemed to fall, and, truly, an antepast of the communion that, we trusted, was momentarily awaiting her in heaven.

I offered her a grave at Mount Auburn. "What, what," she repeated, gathering up her failing tones, "shall I then, lonely and poor, lie down with others and be buried with the rich in that beautiful spot?" She died in serenity. Her funeral was upon a bitter cold day. The few flowers in her coffin were frozen. But her smile in death seemed equally to assure us that this world had never chilled her affections, and that another world had received her spirit to more genial spheres.

But I must refrain from further details, to leave room

for a few general reflections. About twenty of the cases occurring in my walks, have belonged, more or less closely, to some of the other various churches of the city. The remainder, or upwards of one hundred and thirty cases, exclusive of many that escaped my notice from their brevity or other reasons, were connected with the Chapel, or consisted of those legitimately falling within the province of the ministry at large. Nearly thirty have died, — most of the others have recovered, — several are ill now.

Every case presented some points of interest and moment. Were it possible to publish them all, we might be suspected of exaggeration, but should certainly present an overwhelming mass of testimony to the value of the work entrusted to our charge. Our city is distinguished by its justice and charity towards the sick and the poor.

It possesses numerous and excellent Infirmaries and Hospitals, a well endowed and very valuable Dispensary. Improvements and additions to them are in progress or contemplation. Our medical men are as kind, merciful, and devoted to the less favored classes, as they are skilful and respected in all the walks of their profession. Our druggists and apothecaries furnish their aid with a prompt and cheerful spirit, equally honorable to them and grateful to all the friends and visitors of the poor. The good feeling of our people are readily enlisted in errands of mercy to the sick and dying.

Our whole community may justly glory, on this ground, in its private and public character and provisions. The minister at large is fully aware of this, — and cannot but heartily rejoice in it. Without it, his labors would be in vain.

And yet unto it all, great and growing as it may be, he has reason to believe that his own mission may be added. There is room and opportunity for him, too, in this wide and worthy sphere of sentiment and action. Hither is he also called. Here are to be found duties and privileges for him as well as others.

Can he but explore this vast field of observation,—can he but pursue some of the paths, discovering their origin and tracing their end,—can he but investigate with a learner's eye all the causes, aggravations, and effects of disease among the poor, and apply a master's hand, in person or by proxy, to prevent, or heal, or alleviate them, both rich and poor will smile upon his enterprise; his Lord's errand, however partially, will be resumed, and he may not distrust the acceptance and favor of Almighty God, the only Maker and the equal Father. I regret unaffectedly, that I have not been more true to this all-important and most highly privileged portion of my charge. In all humility and faith, I would enter upon its future pursuit. With the sympathies of man and the blessings of Heaven to cheer and aid me, I would make this my chief ambition and my determined aim.

You and all the friends of our common work, will accept my thanks for the encouragements and supports of the past.

I close with congratulating you upon the general prosperity of the ministry at large. The three gentlemen employed in your more immediate service, have kindly and fully co-operated with me from their first entrance upon the work to the present moment.

We are accustomed to pass an hour together, each

week, and at each other's residences in turn,—for mutual counsel and deliberation, and concerted action. This was the mode pursued with the greatest success in Dr. Tuckerman's day. Circumstances had interrupted it from his decease to the past year. Almost every purpose that we may cherish, and much of our usefulness will depend upon it hereafter. We have many points already in view that we hope to cover and secure by it. When the attempt is made, or when the end is gained, we may be authorized to enter into the details of our various and united endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES F. BARNARD.

Boston, March 26, 1846.

The length of these Reports forbids comment. They need no word from your Committee to deepen the impressions they must make and the lessons they would enforce. Could there be a doubt in my mind concerning the necessity of an Institution whose agents should be abroad through this city in close contact with, and investigation of the sources of pauperism and crime, opening the secrets of iniquity, while they carry the bread of life to the famishing, and the waters of divine love and mercy to the fainting by the way-side, that doubt must give way before the accumulated evidence of these Reports. It must be felt deeply and forcibly, that the establishment of this Institution and the faithful working of all its agen

cies, will do more to repress fearful evils and dry up the fountains of misery and wretchedness, than any other means that have yet been discovered and attempted. It calls for the largest sympathy and strongest co-operation. Resources should be increased that its ministers may be multiplied. Our city is rapidly growing, and all that can be done will not be more than sufficient to save it from the degradation and the vice which are the curse of large cities. We rejoice therefore exceedingly in the growing interest taken by other denominations in this holy ministry of love, and in the multiplication of Free Chapels among us. We rejoice that other cities and large towns are putting in operation this mighty engine of good. May God crown the humble strivings of his children with his own omnipotence.

Respectfully submitted.

J. I. T. COOLIDGE.

For the Committee

THE
THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY S. N. DICKINSON.
1847.

R E P O R T .

Origin of the Fraternity.

MORE than twenty years have now elapsed since the ministry at large was commenced in this city. After it had been in existence eight years, the usefulness of its labors was so evident, that it had become an object of general interest, and a desire was felt to establish it upon such lasting foundations as would make it one of the permanent institutions of the city. In accordance with this idea, a plan was matured for a simple and systematic organization, under the name of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, whose special object was the moral and religious improvement of the poor. This plan was fully considered and adopted at a meeting of delegates from nine religious societies, in the spring of 1834; and, from that time, the practical results proceeding from this organization have been such as to establish it in the confidence of the churches, while the extended usefulness of the ministry under its care has won for itself a strong, and, we trust, an abiding Christian sympathy.

In presenting the Thirteenth Annual Report, the Executive Committee would express their conviction, that never, from the commencement of this ministry, have its operations been more calculated to prove widely useful; the city being at this time divided among five efficient laborers, in addition to that section of the city occupied by Rev. C. F.

Ministers at Large.

Barnard; two of these ministers having Chapels, and three giving their whole time to visiting.

Since the last annual meeting, some important changes have taken place, and arrangements have been made which, it is believed, will be of decided advantage. Rev. Dr. Bigelow, who had charge of the Pitts-street Chapel, has, for the last six months, in accordance with his own wishes, employed his time chiefly in visiting and in holding frequent neighborhood meetings, which have been well attended by the destitute and infirm. Rev. S. H. Winkley, late of the Cambridge Divinity School, has taken charge of the Pitts-street Chapel, supplying its pulpit, and extending his labors, as far as possible, through that section of the city; the labors of both these gentlemen have been very successful. Rev. S. B. Cruft has continued his labors, with great satisfaction to the people under his charge, at the Suffolk-street Chapel; while Rev. Warren Burton has diligently employed his time in visiting. And on the first of February, Rev. William Ware became connected with the Fraternity, as one of the ministers at large, since which time he has passed the principal part of every day in visiting among the poor. The Committee feel justified, therefore, in saying that never, since the organization of the Fraternity, has there been more cause for hope and encouragement.

In addition to this, a central office has been opened, where, each day at stated hours, one of the ministers may be found. A similar office was established by Dr. Tuckerman nearly fifteen years ago. That office was finally resigned, for various reasons, first to the "Visitors of the Poor," and finally to the "Boston Society for the Preven-

Quarterly Meetings.

tion of Pauperism." Both of these latter societies have since then taken a different direction; and it was thought advisable to open again, at least for a time, a central office, to be connected with this ministry. It has thus far been unquestionably useful, and served as a check upon vagrants and impostors; while it has extended to many of the deserving, kindness and counsel.*

The Central Board have held quarterly meetings, at which the interests of the Fraternity have been discussed; and, in order that every member of the Central Board might become personally acquainted with the practical operations of the ministry at large, the members of each branch have, at stated times, as has been the custom for several years, acted as a committee, to visit the Chapels and Sunday Schools — examining their condition and operations, and presenting a report of their doings. These reports have expressed general satisfaction, both with the Chapels and the labors of the ministry.

The more detailed operations of this mission will be manifest from those portions of the Reports of the ministers at large which are herewith presented.

REV. MR. CRUFT

Entered upon his duties in February, 1846; — since which time, he states that encouragements have multiplied, and that his moderate expectations have been more than fulfilled. Forty families have been added to his Chapel; so that there are now connected with the Chapel, partly

* See pages 23 and 24.

Social Religious Meetings.

through the Sunday School, which comes equally within the circle of his ministry, one hundred and five families. There are also eighty other families with which he has become acquainted during the year. Mr. Cruft has made, during the year, more than two thousand visits ; and these have been made wherever he has thought good could be done, and the purposes of the ministry promoted. He says, — “I have ministered at the firesides of homes whose inmates have seldom or never been within the walls of a church, either through long physical prostration, or from the hardness of their own depraved hearts. Meetings for religious conversation and prayer have been held once a week, from house to house, throughout the different neighborhoods, for the purpose, as far as possible, of affecting their moral characters, and of strengthening the principles of piety and good feeling in the hearts of their residents. These meetings have been continued through the year, and have, for the most part, been well attended, and by individuals of all denominations. They have been accompanied also, I would fain hope, with some profit ; the results being apparent in more serious and constant attendance upon the ordinances of religion, particularly of public worship, in a greater appreciation of social privileges and obligations, and in better provision made for the religious ordering of households. Parents have been prompted thus to feel more deeply the strength of parental responsibilities. During the year, twelve have united themselves with the church.”

Mr. Cruft also states that he has improved all such special occasions as Christmas, and the close and commencement of the year, as seasons peculiarly favorable to religious impressions.

Moral Neglect of the Young.

"Such season too," he adds, "I have found, as the minister of Christ ever must, in the sick room and in the chamber of the dead and the dying. In these I have witnessed the strength of the Christian's faith, under circumstances when every earthly comfort seemed to have vanished, and the outward condition was such as to repel almost the very approach of friend and stranger: even then that faith has shone forth brightly triumphant, illuminating the whole atmosphere around, and making the lowly room like the gateway of heaven. Some of the sublimest instances of heavenly resignation I have thus seen in the humblest walks of life. I have witnessed many cases of severe bodily distress, during the past winter, and have seen much privation, which I have been enabled, through the kindness of friends, to relieve. I have been present at many death scenes, both of the prepared and the unprepared, and have officiated at eighteen funerals."

Mr. Cruft states that the moral exposure and neglect of children has pressed itself upon his observation, with each day's experience, as a subject of paramount importance. He speaks at some length of the vicious influences to which many are exposed, and dwells upon the necessity of taking efficient measures to have them all brought within the influence of our public schools, and especially the children of foreigners.

"A proper attention," he remarks, "to school education, I am more and more convinced, will prove a most efficient safeguard against pauperism and crime. The truant is not far removed from the vagrant, the vagrant from the beggar, and the beggar from the thief."

The duty of parents, and of teachers in the public schools, is then considered; and the question is asked,

Instruction of the Young.

whether the subject of morals is sufficiently attended to in our schools ; whether it takes precedence, as it should, of all other instruction. It is also suggested, that an officer might be appointed in every school district, a man of judgment and intelligence, of kind feeling, and high moral sense, who should see that all children of a suitable age attend school.* The Report alludes also to an order lately passed in the Primary School Board, permitting the committees of each district to introduce common sewing into their schools.

“In schools,” he writes, “where the poorer children congregate, there is no branch of instruction more useful. Early impressed with the importance of this, I introduced a sewing-school among the poorer children of the Chapel and neighborhood, the advantages of which are already quite apparent. These children are accustomed to meet at my house on Wednesday afternoon of each week, with a few benevolent ladies who kindly volunteer their services, and a happy and pleasant season it is to them. Their industry being turned into a benevolent channel, the best feelings of their hearts are enlisted, their social natures are refined, their moral principles strengthened, and habits of economy and thrift formed.

“Our Sunday School,” he adds, “is under the same faithful superintendence, with a band of teachers whose devotedness is worthy of all commendation. Thirty have been added to its numbers during the past year, and it is now in a promising condition. The only obstacle to the prosperity of the school is the want of a sufficient number of competent teachers, especially male teachers. From

* See page 15.

Need of more Teachers.

this cause, the number of the boys is very much less than it ought to be, when we consider the increase of juvenile depravity. But what can we do? I cannot attempt to bring such into the school, though they are the very ones that ought to be brought; for there is no one to take charge of them when they come. The numbers of the boys are already falling off: shall we suffer them to perish? Shall we fail, for want of teachers to instruct the children of the poor, to gather in the morally exposed, as Robert Raikes did? If it is our special duty to labor for these, are there not more among the friends of this ministry who will be willing to come and aid us?"

It is hoped, by the Committee, that the urgent need at the southern section of the city, and at the Suffolk-street Chapel, will be remembered; and that there may be those who will be ready to answer the call, and to coöperate with Mr. Cruft in his Christian labors.

REV. MR. WINKLEY

Entered upon the duties of this ministry, and took charge of the Pitts-street Chapel in October, 1846; since which he has labored with great assiduity and success. The attendance upon his preaching has been good, and as a visitor he has been highly acceptable. In his Report he says he has constantly been guided in his duties by the conviction that it is Jesus who presents the only way in which either man or child can be entirely redeemed from sin, or even from *any* deep-seated and long-continued vice. To make known the way which Jesus has marked out,

Removal of Obstacles.

and to induce the erring to forsake sin, and to follow Christ, has been his great work. He then alludes to the obstacles which he has met; to scepticism, to indifference, and to mistaken views of religion; upon all of which he earnestly speaks, and then adds, —

“With the hope of removing these and similar obstacles, and of bringing the people to the knowledge of the truth and to lives corresponding thereto, I have spent the greater part of four and sometimes of five days in the week, at their homes, in personal religious conversation. From nine to eleven o'clock of each day, I have received calls for similar objects at my house. In this way I have come in contact quite often with the majority of those properly under my charge. And although I have attempted to hold strictly religious conversation in almost every family which I have visited, and with many individuals from whom I have received visits, I have been so fortunate as never to meet with one who opposed it, or did not seem happy to have it introduced. Of course it has not been equally productive of good results in every instance. But in many cases, atheistical, infidel, sceptical, or simply unsettled views have been opposed with some degree of success. A modification has taken place which, though it may have left the individual far from Christianity, has denoted progress towards the truth. Apathy, with reference to the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and religion, has been in some cases removed. Superstitious and strange ideas of God and of a Christian life have given place to more consistent and rational ones. Not that, in all this, I have labored to impart correct views, merely as correct views, but because a true faith is necessary to a true life.

Means of Usefulness.

I have, therefore, also labored by plain, direct preaching, and by social religious meetings, to make the doctrines of the Gospel affect the heart as well as the intellect. We have had social religious meetings three times a week—a conference meeting on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, and a conversation meeting at my house on Tuesday evening; and once a month a church meeting. These, with the meeting of the choir at my house on Thursday evening, a teachers' meeting at the Chapel on Saturday evening, and other evening meetings and calls, have completely consumed that portion of my time. Our conference, church, and conversation meetings, are powerful aids in making the family of Christ an intelligent and living family, and in opening the minds of many to the great principles of life. This is shown by the constantly increasing interest manifested in the great objects of the church—in the calm yet earnest inquiry of many who would know what it is to be a Christian, and in the consecration of some to the religious life.

“Our Sunday School is conducted by faithful superintendents and a devoted band of teachers, and performs an important part in accomplishing the great work I have in view. It is constantly pouring forth its streams of religious knowledge into many families. There are now connected with the school forty-five teachers, and two hundred and seventy-six pupils. So great is this influence, that I have almost been inclined to say, that I could select those who have been under the care of faithful teachers, by their ready apprehension of Gospel doctrines.

“Though we are thus laboring,” he continues, “in all these ways, to overcome obstacles, and with some success,

Much to be accomplished.

let it not be supposed that we have done much towards the completion of the work ; for this is not the case. Though I have upwards of one hundred and eighty families under my charge, yet many of these are sceptical, and others utterly regardless of the Sabbath and the ordinances thereof. Though better attended, both morning and afternoon, the Chapel is by no means full. Many of those who do attend, are still insensible to the claims of a higher life. All that I can say is, that we have begun the good work, and have succeeded beyond my expectations ; yet a great deal remains to be accomplished : but, retaining the sympathy and aid of our friends, in and out of the Chapel, we trust that, by the power of the Gospel and the assistance of Almighty God, we shall go on to final success, and be the means of bringing home to the Father many of his wandering children."

REV. MR. BURTON

Has had charge of no Chapel, but has given his time almost exclusively to visiting. He thus speaks of his labors : — " During the past year I have been employed in various duties appertaining to my ministry : a portion of the city before omitted I have explored, to find the unobtrusively unfortunate that they might have sympathy, and the perversely wandering that they might be recalled to better ways. It is with peculiar satisfaction that I reflect on the considerable number of families without a regular place of worship, which, in the course of my ministry, I have put

Sabbath Visits and Domestic Education.

under the care of a clergyman of such denomination as the individual preferred: if every shepherd receiving such charge has been faithful thereto, no small good must have been done. I have attended on the sick with pecuniary aid and religious consolation; I have revisited cases of need, and of otherwise peculiar interest, which I had discovered in previous walks. On the Sabbath, I have preached at our Chapels for the poor whenever requested; but my more particular duty on the day of rest from secular labor has been to visit families, the husband and father of which could not so conveniently be seen on other days. The leisure permitted sufficient opportunity for the reading of the Scriptures, for prayer, and prolonged and profitable conversation. I have left the circle of the dissolute in tears, after they had listened to holy writ, and to words of exhortation and prayer. There was a satisfaction to my mind in producing in such abodes even a transitory impression; while, at the homes of the decent and honest poor, I have spent some of the happiest Sabbath hours of my life."

Mr. Burton speaks at some length on Domestic Education, and states that he has visited between fifty and sixty clergymen in this city and the vicinity, and requested them to give a series of sermons or lectures upon the subject; that the proposition was in general most cordially received, and that many have since discoursed upon this topic, to the great acceptance and edification of their hearers.

In speaking of our foreign population, Mr. Burton says: "I beg leave here to remark, that I believe the pastors and teachers of the Catholic Church are taking unwearied pains to train up the young of their community in sobriety

Catholic Sunday Schools.

and virtue. I have scarcely seen better order in any Sabbath School, than I have witnessed in theirs; and surely this is no inferior praise, when we consider the great numbers which are there crowded together. In the Franklin-street school, there are about twelve hundred in attendance every Sabbath; in the Endicot-street school, seven hundred; and in the Moon-street, three hundred. The boys leave the school at about fifteen years of age; and many of them afterwards contract rather vagrant habits on the day of rest, in consequence of lack of room to accommodate them in the churches. It is in contemplation to erect a chapel purposely for the young. Out of a Catholic population of thirty-four thousand, — considering the ignorance, poverty, and miserable abodes of many, — the wonder should be that no more of the young are scattered abroad on the Sabbath. Again, many of the children whom we see thus idle in the streets upon the Sabbath, have been in schools some portion of the day, and now prefer the open air, to the stifling inside of their one-room home. To the careless observer, the aspect of things among this population seems much more unfavorable than would appear if all the extenuating circumstances were properly understood. I make these remarks," writes Mr. Burton, "because I believe there is much unjust complaint of the neglect of the Catholic clergy to educate the children and youth of their church. Let not our hands," he adds, "be against them."

Writing of juvenile delinquency, Mr. Burton says:—"During the past year, I have learned many facts respecting the morals of the city, especially those of the young. Truancy from school has been a growing evil, subjecting parents and teachers to great trouble and vexation. In

Juvenile Delinquency.

March, 1846, for the first time, there was provided a special police to look after truants, and bring them back to duty. During the first ten months, there had occurred five hundred and fifty cases, in which boys had been carried back to their teachers; and between two and three hundred, not registered as scholars, were induced to enter school by the officers on this service. During the first three months of the present year, there have been forty-six cases of arrested truancy. In consequence of this municipal action, the evil in view has very much decreased; and, by continued vigilance, is likely to be quite done away. Yet, notwithstanding this improvement, the boys living in idleness and mischief are numerous; many of these vagrant lads herd together, at times committing depredations, until they are at length seized by the police for crime. Between March 1st and November 20th, 1846, one hundred and twelve minors were arrested for larceny. Of these, seventy-three were under fifteen years of age; since November, fifty-one more have been taken up for the same offence; making one hundred and sixty-three arrests in thirteen months. A portion of these were, under palliating circumstances, dismissed without further process; and the remainder were arraigned at the bar of the court.

"To the Minister at large," he continues, "are presented the worst evils of the city in all their appalling nakedness: he therefore cannot but realize, more than most persons, the importance and necessity of reform. He feels, too, that efforts for reform most especially belong to his office; for he knows that much the largest portion of pauperism springs directly or indirectly from vice. With these experiences and convictions, I have spent some time in particu-

Theatres and Bowling Alleys.

lar reformatory movements. That regarding decency in the theatres — which has excited much attention during the past year — was of very serious interest ; and, in coöperation with others, I devoted to it for a while all my time and activity. Through the decisive action of the city authorities, the nuisance complained of — that public disgrace, as old as the theatre itself — was entirely removed ; and it may be well here to communicate the authentic intelligence, that during the past season there has prevailed all that decorum which was hoped as the result of this reform."

Much has been said of late respecting bowling alleys. From investigation it is Mr. Burton's conviction, that a large proportion of vagrant, vicious, and criminal boys have received at these places a special training in depravity. He states that he has obtained accurate accounts of twenty-eight bowling establishments in this city, exclusive of East and South Boston ; that in these are employed about two hundred boys, who are from nine to sixteen years of age ; that some are frequently discharged, and others employed ; so that many more than those actually in attendance at any one period, are exposed to the pernicious influence of these places of amusement.

"Here," says Mr. Burton, "they learn to gamble and drink ; here they grow profane and obscene ; here they become hardened against all domestic discipline, and are prepared to take those onward steps in crime which lead to the jail or the prison. The superintendent of the House of Reformation," he adds, "informed me that almost all the lads sent to that establishment had been at one time or another employed in bowling alleys."

Some very strong remarks follow upon the evil of

Intemperance.

Intemperance, and upon the multitude of places which have been open for the sale of intoxicating liquors. "Had," he says, "the so-called respectable owners of the houses put to this nefarious use,—had the parents and employers of the youth going in thereat,—had the influential portion of the community but done their duty, — these fountains would long ago have been sealed. But the evil of intemperance has lately been somewhat stayed; the law established in righteousness is beginning to prevail; the religious, the moral, yea, the merely politic, are besought to aid our authorities in sustaining the law; they are implored to save the weak and the tempted from the destroying curse. If all Christians would put on the whole armor of God, and, as one man, set their faces against the abomination of alcohol, they would command an influence and achieve a good which have never yet been accomplished. They would annihilate that demon vice which causes three-fourths of all poverty and crime. Such a body of men, standing forth in all the strength and majesty of Christian principle, would be morally irresistible. Therefore, in behalf of young men hastening headlong to ruin, and of older men dying before their time; in behalf of tender women made utterly wretched by besotted husbands, and of children ragged, filthy, and vicious, from the drunkard's neglect; in behalf of a community burdened by the expense of the vice, and debased by cherishing and conniving at it, every Christian man is implored to come to the aid of the ministers at large, and help on this momentous cause."

Visits among the Suffering.

REV. DR. BIGELOW

Entered on the duties of this ministry in April, 1845. For some time he had charge of the Pitts-street Chapel; but, in September, 1846, other arrangements having been made, he relinquished the care of that Chapel to Rev. Mr. Winkley. In speaking of this change he says:—"I thus feel myself relieved from much solicitude, and shall now be at liberty to apply myself more undividedly to the duties of a department, the importance of which has impressed itself on my mind with growing strength since the outset of my ministry."

Since that time, Rev. Dr. Bigelow has had assigned him an extensive and populous district in the north and west section of the city, where he has labored as a visiting missionary from house to house. He says of this, that "it is an ever-renewing, never-ending occupation. The work can at no time be said to be finished. The busiest day, spent in such employment, may bring weariness and lassitude at its close, but seldom the feeling that all has been achieved that is commensurate with the amount of suffering, which an ever-growing perception of its extent and variety must painfully obtrude on the mind."

During the past year, Dr. Bigelow has made twenty-one hundred visits; and of these he says:—"Experience convinces me of the vital necessity of this department of labor in the ministry at large. I say labor; for faithfully performed, in the true spirit of the office, it is no light or holiday amusement, no morning pastime or evening recreation. It is a service unremitting, and, as must needs

Scenes of Woe.

be, wearing and exhausting. It imposes manifold cares and anxieties, often awakening solicitudes and sympathies of the most painful nature. It requires not only the sacrifice of self-indulgence, but subjection to offices very likely the most distasteful and repugnant; sometimes a contact with scenes shocking to every sense, moral and physical. But, offensive as particular scenes may be, the duty of visiting them is demanded by our social interests, as well as by the ties of a common humanity.

"So many are the forms," he continues, "of human wretchedness, so manifold are its aspects in a crowded city like ours, especially amid the dense, populous localities generally assigned as the abodes and haunts of indigence, that new features of the dire spectacle perpetually exhibit themselves to the explorer's gaze. Sympathy, of course, is tasked afresh at every turn. And when all is done which the voice of kindness, the offices of tenderness, the succors of charity, the consolations of religion, may impart to the weak, the sick, the afflicted, the disconsolate — in the review of the whole, so trifling seems the relief, compared with the deep suffering witnessed, and the frightful amount unreached, yet known to reign around, that the heart is filled with gloom, and ready at times to sink down in despair at the powerlessness, apparently, of all the ministering offices of love to staunch the endless diversities of human woe. Yet, judging from the feelings not seldom awakened in the bosoms of sufferers — from the kindled eye, the beaming feature, the face lighted up with a gleam of hope and joy at the voice and presence of a friendly visitor, and the glistening smile where the shadows of melancholy had long since settled over the pale countenance —

The wretchedly Degraded.

when, still more, such visitor is welcomed in his higher character as a minister of Christ, and a 'son of consolation,' who would speak of salvation provided, and offer refreshing foretastes of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, — I cannot doubt that the solace furnished, the comfort rendered, and the inflowing of happiness from the Fountain of Eternal Life, evince a good often accomplished by such ministering agencies, not perhaps easily appreciable, but great and precious in amount.

"When I have turned to characters of another sort, where all for a time seemed rough and forbidding, until, at length, confidence has been gained, and the heart communed with, and the ear opened to good counsel, and the word of God been read, and the voice of prayer, first lifted in some wretched dwelling, has been heard and responded to in a spirit of deep reverence; where God before was dishonored, and his name blasphemed, and his Sabbaths profaned, and intemperance ran riot; where the madness of impiety has been checked, and God's name and God's law have been hallowed, and sobriety and order, sweet peace and the domestic virtues, have sprung up and flourished instead — these things, I say, when witnessed (and mine eyes have seen them, and my humble agency God has, in a measure, blest in bringing some of them to pass), have served as beckoning signals to faith, and grateful stimulants to 'hope on and hope ever,' despite of all unto-ward obstacles, in plying each fresh experiment.

"And suppose the worst, — suppose that disappointment and failure await on patient efforts to raise and prop the sunken fabric of humanity, and (in defiance of warnings, counsels, entreaties, prayers, and tears) the poor degraded

Brighter Aspects.

being, whom we must call our brother, and fain would save, persists (as, alas! too often happens) in his old wretched courses of sin, still the good attempted may not be wholly lost. The consciousness of being watched may act as a secret check to vice, so that the tempted sometimes shall not fall, or, falling, plunge so recklessly as otherwise. Conscience may be silently roused the while, and good seed lodged, by perseverance, in the heart of a man, which, quickened by the breath of the Almighty, may in after years spring up to bring forth fruit that shall flourish to immortal life. Granting yet more — granting the utmost to discouragements, in cases like these, when despair gathers in the soul of aught of good being permanently wrought on materials so unpromising and intractable save by the omnipotence of Divine Grace, still charity pleads for those poor fallen beings.”

But there is another aspect. “On my visiting list, embracing many scores of families in the humblest walks of life, are some which I have felt it to be a privilege to look in upon, in my pastoral rounds; not only for the good to be there imparted, and the lesson of cheerful contentment learnt mid many visible outward privations, but for the advantages of social converse with minds acute, intelligent, and not destitute of a degree of refinement, especially when to all other traits are superadded the charm and grace of true piety. They constitute, it may be said, bright exceptions to characters and conditions of quite another class with which my ministry is most conversant; still they are relieving tints, as lights among shadows thrown upon a pictured canvass, and are proportionably prized and welcomed.

Tracts and Sabbath Duties.

“In my walks the past winter, I have distributed many hundreds of Tracts, besides Bibles and other useful books; taking care, in respect to the former (the Tracts), to select the most popular and approved from all accessible sources; having due regard to the variety of characters, ages, and circumstances in the persons of the designed recipients. I have found them to be always acceptable; and much good, I have reason to believe, has, in divers instances, been produced thereby.

“My Sabbaths, save when I have been disabled by indisposition, have been actively spent, for the most part, in ministering visits to the habitations of the poor. I have chosen that season specially for the purpose of carrying the instructions and offices of religion to the ignorant and neglected, the secluded and solitary, the aged and infirm, the sick and bed-ridden, the blind and halt, the bereaved, the troubled, and disconsolate; I have sought out such to whom access to Sabbath ordinances was of necessity denied; and to whom the voice of God’s minister, God’s word and worship, would be proportionably more timely and grateful. The day has been also availed of, to reach another class of souls — the men by whom the Sabbath is habitually slighted and profaned; men more likely to be then found at home in the bosom of their families; and with whom I have not hesitated, as occasion offered, to speak fully on subjects they are wont to shun, and reason on ‘righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.’ By these domiciliary visits, I have been enabled to operate — advantageously, I would fain hope — on far more points than by formal lecturing at some set time and place: nor has the occupation been light; as sometimes from ten to

Central Office.

twelve working hours have been devoted to as many or more homes, in this Sabbath task of fireside ministrations."

On the night of the twenty-first of January of the past winter, a night memorable for its severity as the coldest of the season, a disastrous conflagration swept over the north-western portion of the city, driving out more than a hundred families from their homes, unsheltered and almost unclad amid the piercing blast. By this calamity, many households were stript in an hour of all they possessed. Dr. Bigelow took a most active part amid these scenes of suffering, in obtaining shelter and aid for the unfortunate; and his labors were not confined to a brief period, but continued through many weeks.

It has been already stated, that in December, under the direction of the executive committee, a Central Office was opened. This was to serve as a place where the friends of the ministry could meet—where they could be sure to find some one of the ministers at stated hours, and where the ministers themselves could from time to time confer upon such subjects as might come before them. But especially was this room opened that it might aid to a better distribution of charities; that the ministers might act more in concert, and that the friends of the ministry might send any doubtful case to this office for investigation. The sympathy and confidence of the humane has often been imposed upon, so that much has been worse than wasted on improper objects, while the humble and meritorious have been neglected. Reference tickets were printed and circulated, so that any stranger who applied for charity could, with such a ticket, be referred to this office. An office-book is kept in which the names and residences of all applicants are recorded; while

Central Office.

the various ministers, by a subdivision of the city, make an investigation of every case, and then act according to their best judgment.

Several things in regard to this office should be borne in mind. It is not intended as a new centre for the free distribution of alms. A vast fund would be required to meet such demands, and no fund exists but what is very limited; nor is a large fund desirable. The object is investigation, rather than the free pouring forth of charity; and then, if the case is worthy, it will be referred back to the individual, or, with a recommendation, to some existing society. It is not the purpose of this office to interfere with either public or private charities. All personal intercourse with the poor — where the individual can devote his time to obtain a proper knowledge of the case — is too sacred to be interrupted or diminished. This office is not intended to lessen the sense of personal responsibility, but merely to aid as one means in doing good. If an individual cannot make personal investigation, then he can send the applicant to this office. It is true that this ministry is not intended to be an eleemosynary institution; but at the same time the ministers at large, going forth in the spirit of the good Samaritan, should be able to relieve bodily suffering, and attend in some measure to temporal wants; and they will find ample use for all the means placed in their hands by benevolent individuals. Of the multitudes of mendicants referred to the Central Office, many have been found in great destitution; not a few impostors and persons wholly unworthy of alms have been detected; while others have proved proper objects of relief, and the aid needed has been given.

Different Classes.

While all the ministers have united in the arrangements connected with this office, they have selected Dr. Bigelow to take the general superintendence; and in his report he gives a detailed account of what has been done. This duty takes him from his occupation as a visitor among the poor only a short time through the day, while it facilitates the general labors of the ministry.

Dr. Bigelow, in dwelling upon some aspects of society, says: — “It seems to me at times as if the apparent prosperity by which we are surrounded, were reposing on a filmy crust, spread over an abyss of dark-heaving, smouldering, selfish passions, threatening some future explosion, of which even now low mutterings in warning are occasionally given. But thank God there is in moral causes an omnipotence, as effective on the one hand to redeem and save, as there is in evil to destroy. Let the bitter fountains of jealousy be sweetened, and smoothing oil be poured over their turbid waves. Let us labor to produce a sounder sentiment in the public mind, and kindlier feelings between the different members of society. Let there be a juster recognition of mutual rights and duties. Let a closer intercourse be cultivated by the more favored classes with their less fortunate neighbors. It is among the benefits, by no means the least, of a ministry at large, to create a better acquaintance and heartier good-will between the several ranks of society; to dispel the ignorance, and soften the prejudices, too often nourished in the bosoms of the poor; and to open the hearts, draw forth the sympathies, and teach the correspondent duties of the prosperous, towards all in humbler spheres.

The highest Purpose.

“But our highest function,” he adds, “is to war with sin, the fruitful parent of the manifold miseries of the world; to aid in the expulsion of the demon vice of intemperance; to train the poor to the culture of manly virtues; to lift them up to feelings of self-reliance; to plant the fear of God in their hearts; and to nourish habits of industry and order, integrity, frugality, and sobriety in their lives. There is no corruption so foul, and no peril so great, that the Gospel of Christ cannot meet them, providing an antidote for the one and a sure defence against the other.”

REV. WILLIAM WARE

Entered upon this service on the eleventh of February, and made his first visit on the fifteenth of the same month. He commenced his labors in the eighth and ninth ward, and after this took the ninth and tenth ward. In his report he says,—

“I have seen enough to impart some idea both of the extent and depth of the poverty and wretchedness of large portions of our city population. I have seen enough to be convinced that there is a large amount of suffering from poverty, deserved and undeserved, and from vice, for which, relief, through the supply of physical wants and the exertion of moral influence, cannot, on any present plan of benevolent action, be adequately afforded. I make this observation on the supposition that the Irish, and the Irish Catholics, are to be considered,

Foreign Poor.

equally with our own people and Protestants, proper subjects of our ministry. For myself, I have made no distinction; and I have supposed, rightly I presume, that none was intended to be made. But, considering the Irish Catholics as coming legitimately under the charge of their ministry — under a ministry of moral influences, — I see, all around, the most painful evidences of a great amount of unrelieved human want and wretchedness, springing from a variety of causes; unrelieved, in spite of all the agencies of a moral, social, religious kind that are at present in operation — in spite of all the numerous charities that exist for feeding, clothing, sheltering, and warming the poor.

“As far as my labors have extended, I have found only Irish, and, with few exceptions, Irish Catholics: indeed, leaving these out, there would, I think, be no room for my services. These have been brought to my notice, chiefly, through the present system of tickets sent in to the office by applicants for charity at the door. Of course I have been brought into contact with those only, or chiefly, of the lowest and most destitute; and those, too, of the least moral elevation — rather I should say, perhaps, with those deeply schooled in every species of deception and falsehood. But low and degraded as they have been, squalid through poverty, and injured by their vices, I have not found them, I know not if in any one instance, altogether inaccessible to some good and even religious influence to be exerted upon them. In a single case, where the prospect was at first utterly dark and hopeless, every desirable reformation has been brought about. With sufficient atten-

Gratitude, and Willingness to hear.

tion in other cases, it is not right to doubt whether similar good issues might not with some good reason be expected. In every case I have a fair promise; much encouragement to effort in their behalf. I have found them ready, with sufficient meekness, to receive reproof and admonition; and open to the various inducements I have held out to them, to a change of their habits, both of personal self-neglect and vicious indulgence. The kind-heartedness of these people in the midst of their drunkenness and dirt, — in the midst of their miseries either from misfortune or vice; the readiness with which they receive you, in cases even where nothing is to be looked for but the kindness of a visit; their deep gratitude, deeper than mere words — though of them there are always many and warm, for any favors that are bestowed — make one very hopeful of some permanent good effect upon their character and habits, provided there can be time to operate on them with sufficient constancy, — time enough to establish a close and intimate relationship between the minister and these his people. There may be a deceitfulness in such cases, or in many such, that shall eventually betray itself, as is a common apprehension, I believe, in respect to this people; and your labor, in part at least, may be thrown away. But, as yet, I am happy to say, it has not been manifested, beyond an extent that must be considered quite reasonable in any view of human nature. Still, for any great, sure, lasting benefit to be realized, one could rely, I should think, as I have already hinted, only upon a constant, long-continued moral oversight; upon very frequent visits — a kind and fraternal interest shown in every way in which a real and abiding sympathy could possibly make itself felt.”

Families should be gathered into a Parish.

Mr. Ware goes on to state that, "if this ministry contemplates any thing farther and higher than mere almsgiving, which, though essential, is not its first and highest object, families and individuals must be gathered into a sort of parish, and the same care should be exercised towards them as in any other parish, — only, indeed, a much closer and more anxious care, but of the same kind, — if any decided good result is to be expected."

The Committee are happy in being able to communicate this first report from one so universally respected and beloved, and they trust that Mr. Ware's health may become so firmly established that he will be able to spend many useful years in this most important part of the Master's vineyard.

REV. MR. BARNARD

Has been actively engaged as a minister among the poor since 1832, and he states that every year has strengthened his convictions of the importance of the work. During the past year he has acted as Overseer of the Poor in one of the wards of the city, and as one of the Directors of the Howard Benevolent Society; he has also been connected with the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism, and has been one of those who have met at the Central Office connected with this ministry. All these offices have given him an extended opportunity of noticing the operations of public and private charity in its influence upon those aided,

The most Abject and Depraved.

and also of comparing the influence of these charities with the more spiritual influences connected with this Christian ministry.

“And were I now asked,” he writes, “to declare in a word the result upon my own mind, I should say that it is a deep, clear, and abiding sense of the inestimable value of the ministry at large. I entered on this enterprise with the liveliest hope and the firmest faith. Each year, and the past year above all others, has increased, if possible, my convictions. Permit me to dwell upon this subject somewhat in detail, with every indulgence for my feeble and imperfect treatment of a topic so momentous. To be better understood, I would divide the poor, who fall under this ministry, into three classes. There are, first, large numbers whose condition is wretched indeed: you cannot meet them without a pang; you cannot visit them without pain, and sorrow, and shame. But, however mean and abject their outward condition may be, you soon perceive that theirs is a deeper and far worse poverty than that of food, raiment, or shelter alone. They are idle, deceitful, dishonest, or profligate. They are indifferent, reckless, or abandoned. Having never attended the week-day school, the Sabbath school, or the church, they are destitute alike of the simplest rudiments of learning, morality, and religion. And here your heart has reason to bleed for them. Could you shield and save but one of them from the misery that surrounds him, it would be a noble achievement. Could you but do something to prevent the perpetuity, or check the growth, of such calamities in their children or in others, you would be engaged in the holiest, highest, and happiest office of charity.

“Now, precisely here, do I find, in the first place, the min-

Those who are connected with no Religious Society.

istry at large — apart and distinct from all other human agencies — pursuing its mission, and accomplishing its work. Baffled and disappointed a thousand times, it yet sometimes succeeds in this field, — the most dark and hopeless that man is ever called to explore. Were it not, indeed, for the light and hope afforded by such a ministry for this human waste and wilderness, I cannot but feel that despair would be our portion, and desertion our duty, so far as this truly wretched class is concerned. Again, there are to be found, in all our cities, many who, from various causes, are not connected with any religious society, and who, from habit and choice, would gladly avail themselves of any opportunity to be introduced to this or that communion, according to circumstances. To all of them, the ministry at large may prove of invaluable service. Almost every day offers occasion for missionary offices of this character. The first inquiry should always be:—‘Have you attended church heretofore? of what denomination has it been? what church do you wish to attend now?’ Nor can there be any doubt as to the course that liberality, and a due regard to the rights of private judgment, require at our hands. For the past twenty years, every denomination in the city has in this way been receiving accessions which it would be difficult to enumerate. If any of us have ever, for a time, been debarred from the privileges of the sanctuary, — if we believe in the good effects of the habit of church attendance, — we can easily appreciate and estimate this kind of benefit resulting from the ministry at large.

“There remain yet others to be noticed;—I mean those who, from any sufficient reason, prefer to make us

The Need of Permanency.

their ministers, and our chapels their place of attendance. Year after year, as each of us pursues his way, — if he is at all suited to his sphere, and the blessing of Heaven is not withheld, — he will find himself the centre of a circle such as few can fill, and of an influence such as few can wield. The Saviour said to his disciples, ‘I will make you fishers of men.’ Perhaps no words of the Great Teacher occur oftener to the mind of the minister at large. Annoyances, embarrassments, hindrances, disappointments, are forgotten; petty cares or vexatious details sink into their own insignificance. Our work rises before us in its just and heavenly proportions: we see a new sky; we breathe a new air; we tread a new earth. And as want or sickness, or change, or death, brings us and some poor family into close and permanent Christian relations, have we not reason to adore the Providence that crowns and accepts our work? I have thought of this too long, — I have watched the work too closely, — I have been too often and too deeply moved, to be mistaken. In all of Dr. Tuckerman’s labors, — in those of all his successors, here or elsewhere, — the importance of a permanent Christian relationship has been established; visiting from house to house; listening to the pleas of the destitute, and relieving their temporal wants: in fine, the whole labor of the ministry at large is of no avail, unless the elements of intimacy and permanency exist. But with these, character, consistency, and dignity, are at once conferred upon our work. Without these, — or without the ability to induce these, — the best endeavors would be useless; every motive would be misapplied, and every hope and expectation must terminate in disappointment.

What we may Expect.

“I am sure, if I could not establish a permanent acquaintance with some portion of them at least, I should never desire again to have my attention called to these classes of my fellow-men. Among the thousands to be visited, there are hundreds whom we may know and serve for the rest of our days upon earth. Were it not so, it would be folly in us to pursue our labors any further; it would be wrong to commend them again to your sympathy and your prayers.

“May we not, respectfully but earnestly, beg the friends of our ministry to bear this point in mind. It is true that we are visitors of the poor, and almoners of the rich; but it is no less true, and much more to be remembered, that we are ministers at large; or, in other words, ordained and set apart to be, to those belonging to none of the regular churches, what other pastors are to their flocks.

“And here also I may say, that all my experience, during the past twelve months, has served to bring our undertaking into a clearer and broader light. I have witnessed with emotions of joy the progress of this great and good work, not merely in my own more immediate sphere, but also in that of all my associates, whether of our own or any other denomination; and to all that has thus far been accomplished, shall we not look forward to what remains to be done, and think of the condition of things as they would be if this work could be perfectly carried out? Words can hardly describe, or the imagination picture, the bright and blissful day that reason and religion conspire to announce. Whoever has been favored with the humblest post in the ministry at large has had glimpses, at least, of its dawn and its glory.

Emigration.

“We have abundant reason to review the past with joy and gratitude; and can we hesitate to pursue our high calling without an earnest prayer for the divine blessing, and a lively hope, under God, of worthy issues and reasonable success?”

These Reports bear abundant testimony to the efficient manner in which this work has been conducted. The gentlemen now in this ministry have labored with unwearied assiduity; and no one at all conversant with its duties can question for a moment the vast importance of their efforts, in alleviating human suffering, and reclaiming the erring from immorality and crime. Their labors are, indeed, of an unostentatious and private character, and many of the advantages flowing from them must, from the nature of the case, remain unseen: but it is not all so; there are, in this community, virtues which owe their prevalence, in no small degree, to this ministry. The order and tranquillity, the industry and enterprise, which we see around us, have thus been greatly fostered and established.

In remembering the extent of foreign emigration, which often brings to our shores the most ignorant and degraded, we can hardly be surprised that there is so much misery, but may rather wonder that we see so little that is appalling. During the past year, more than fifteen thousand emigrants landed upon the wharves of this city; and between the first of January and April, two thousand more arrived — many of them in the most loathsome condition, and, in one or two cases, so exhausted that they

Why we are no worse.

actually died on their way from the vessel, before they could reach their dwelling. With such facts before us, we may ask, not why there is so much wretchedness, but why there is no more. And no one can consider this ministry, without perceiving its powerful agency in counteracting the evils which would otherwise force themselves upon us. When we see the abounding temptations to evil which exist, so far from wondering that many are placed in our jails, and brought before our tribunals of justice, we are led to inquire, 'How is it that so many maintain their integrity?' The guiding hand of this ministry has prevented thousands from falling; and, but for its faithful ministrations, we should soon perceive a very different state of things.

During the last six months, one minister at large has made twelve hundred visits, and twenty-one hundred during the year. Another has had more than one hundred families under his pastoral charge, in addition to visits he has been constantly called to make beyond that circle, amounting in all annually to more than two thousand. Another, who has been connected with this ministry but six months, has had more than one hundred and eighty families under his charge, and has made in that time fifteen hundred. Thus three ministers have made, during the past year, upwards of seven thousand visits; and the five, at the same ratio, would have made over eleven thousand. It is true that the mere enumeration of visits is no absolute test of the amount of good done. But where these visits have been made, by intelligent and judicious men, for the highest Christian purposes, — not always or chiefly to dispense pecuniary relief, but to comfort and advise, to warn or en-

More to be done.

courage, — then, if of these visits any reasonable proportion has been useful, who does not perceive that a great amount of good must have been accomplished? And in estimating the good done, we must add to the visits the influence of the Chapels, with their Sabbath services, and evening meetings, and Sunday schools, and sewing schools, and libraries, and other instrumentalities.

The practical result of this ministry, through the past twenty years, gives strength to our faith, and the experience of that time throws its light over our path. The poor, the afflicted, and the tempted, are yet with us; and there are urgent reasons for continued effort. May we leave nothing undone which will tend to carry elevating and purifying influences to every portion of our city, that light may strike down to its lowest depths, and the power of Christianity be made known to every creature!

During the past year, to keep pace with the growing population of our city, more laborers were needed; and though we had not the full means in our treasury, we had faith that all that should be needed would be promptly and cheerfully contributed. This city of generous charities has never yet been found wanting when any reasonable demand has been made; and we feel sure that the various churches interested in this ministry will be ready to unite with new ardor,

It is the hope of the Executive Committee, that fourteen hundred dollars may be raised in addition to last year's subscriptions. Indeed, this will be needed to defray the necessary expenses; and we doubt not, that all the churches will gladly unite in doing their part. If double that sum were contributed, a still larger amount of good

More to be done.

might be accomplished. And where in Christendom is there a holier work? Where, at home or abroad, can a charity be found more worthy of our warmest sympathy and earnest coöperation?

Let us strive to make this city the model city of the world; exterminate from it every mark of pollution; purge it from vice and corruption; and disseminate the divine principles of the Gospel, until refinement, sobriety, and virtue shall become the universal characteristic of the people. Thus may we stand as a living centre, radiating on every side spiritual life and light.

The Committee earnestly desire that this holy charity, which has been so signally blessed, may be made even yet more effectual. Gratifying as the past has been, may we not hope for increasing good in the future?

In closing this Annual Report, we would express our gratitude to that kind Providence which has thus far crowned our labors, and pray that the same merciful God may give us continued encouragement, and enable us to carry forward this work to its perfect completion.

Respectfully submitted, for the Committee,

R. C. WATERSTON.

*** The expenses of this Ministry from April, 1846, to April, 1847, embracing salaries of the Ministers, expenses of the Chapels, printing Reports, &c. were \$5,154.70

The expenditures for the current year, owing to extended plans and additional ministers, will amount to about \$6,500; requiring, as has been stated above, an increased contribution of about \$1,400, to which the attention of the various Branches is particularly requested.

OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT.

HENRY B. ROGERS, Esq.

SECRETARY.

REV. R. C. WATERSTON.

TREASURER.

BENJAMIN SEAVER, Esq.

The above officers of the Fraternity, together with two members chosen by the Board, Rev. S. K. LOTHROP and ABIEL CHANDLER, Esq., form the Executive Committee.

DELEGATES FROM THE BRANCHES

OF THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

THE NEW NORTH BRANCH.

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REV. AMOS SMITH, *Secretary.*

WILLIAM PALFREY, *Treasurer.*

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J. W. BALDWIN, *Treasurer*.
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JOHN SHELTON, *Secretary.*

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JOHN LEWIS and JACOB ULMAN.

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CHARLES G. INGERSOLL, *Secretary.*

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CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR BRANCH.

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F. C. MANNING, *Secretary.*

ELIJAH COBB, *Treasurer.*

HENRY B. ROGERS and ROBERT WATERSTON, Sen.

The First Church, the West Church, and the Stone Chapel, contribute towards the objects of the Fraternity, though they are not represented by delegates.

THE
FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE
BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON, 21, SCHOOL STREET.
1848.



R E P O R T.

IN presenting their Fourteenth Annual Report, the Executive Committee would express their acknowledgments to that kind Providence which has enabled them, through another year, to carry out the purposes of this Fraternity.

It is not to be expected, that the labors of this Ministry should be signalized by extraordinary occurrences, but rather by uniform fidelity, and quiet and practical usefulness; and it is confidently believed, that the good results of this Ministry, during the past season, have not fallen behind those of any former year, but that all the duties connected with it have been performed with uncommon ability and marked success.

Perhaps no city in the world has been more respected than our own for its high standard of morals. It has been honorably distinguished for its general industry and public order. Its schools, its hospitals, its asylums, are proof of munificent liberality and enlightened benevolence. Its multiplied institutions, not only for the amelioration of physical and mental suffering, but for the diffusion of education and the extension of Christianity, have not been without their effect: they have not only had

their origin in a high Christian principle, but they have disseminated the same principles through the community. Still, with the rapid growth of a city, which within twenty years has doubled its population, it cannot be surprising that there should be increasing temptations to evil, and a necessity for renewed effort, if the standard of the public morals is to be sustained.

Within the last twelve months, 8,763 persons have been arrested by the night police; and, of this number, 4,316 were intoxicated. During the last quarter, there were taken in charge by the watchmen 2,412 persons, and 606 of these were females. In addition to which, 140 intoxicated persons were taken to their homes; and, in the same period, 634 persons were arrested by the day police. In the same time, there were reported at the office of the City Marshal 166 robberies; and the amount of property stolen amounted to \$9,836. From the 1st of January to the 15th of March, the number arrested by the day police was 589; the amount of property stolen, \$4,032. From January to the 15th of March, 1,962 were arrested; and 1,016 of these were for drunkenness, and 214 were females. About 1,200 persons are annually committed to our House of Correction; and, during the last year, 2,067 persons were committed to our jail. We might go on accumulating statistics; but this is sufficient to show, that, constituted as this city now is, — whatever we may say of its general order, and the excellence of its institutions, — it is not destitute of vice and crime.

It is evident, that, if we wish to sustain even the present standard of morals, it can be done only by vigilant effort; and if we would remove existing evils, and establish industry and virtue in their place, it must be accomplished by united and earnest labor.

We do not hesitate to say, that, of all the means for checking vice and establishing virtue, there is nothing which has ever been devised more admirably adapted in theory, and more signally successful in practice, than the Ministry at Large.

The root of all evil is ignorance and irreligion. The ignorant must be enlightened, and the irreligious must be brought to feel the power of Christianity in its elevating and sanctifying influences. To effect much good, it is necessary to go to the hidden springs of character. The true redemption of man and of society can come alone from the gospel.

The Ministry at Large is peculiarly adapted to meet the wants of every large city, and each succeeding year brings new proof of its power. Indeed, what could be more desirable than that intelligent and faithful men should devote their whole time and energy in visiting among the dwellings of the poor, — becoming personally acquainted with their characters and condition, — warning the erring, comforting the sick, protecting the young, gathering the neglected into schools and churches, and preaching to all the revealed will of Heaven?

During the past year, there have been connected with this Fraternity five ministers; two having chapels, and three devoting their whole time to visiting. One of the ministers made, within eleven months and a half, over 3,100 visits; another, who has a chapel, has made between 2,300 and 2,400 visits. Taking this as the average, they collectively made *thirteen thousand* visits among the poor. This alone implies a vast amount of individual labor; and going, as ministers of the gospel, to exert a spiritual influence, such visits must have been of incalculable advantage.

Much has been done to ameliorate the physical condition of the poor. Alms have been, to a limited degree, distributed; but this has been done with great caution, and always as subsidiary to higher objects. It has been well understood, that the casual bestowment of alms, or an occasional visit to the abodes of wretchedness, will never confer the permanent benefit which should be desired; and therefore the chief object has always been to elevate the character, to encourage honest effort, and to awaken a desire for self-improvement. Food and fuel and clothing have been occasionally distributed (as they always have been from the beginning of this Ministry) to relieve extreme suffering; but this has always been from *private sources*, and NEVER from the funds of the Fraternity. The direct work of the Fraternity has always been moral and spiritual; and, though the Ministers at Large have not wholly overlooked temporal and physical wants, their chief purpose has been to diffuse elevating and Christian influences through society. By them, many, for whom the snare was spread, have been saved from infamy; the sick chamber has been cheered, and the dying have been taught to look with new faith and joy to heaven.

Two years since, it was considered advisable to open a Central Office, where the Ministers at Large might meet for consultation, and where, at stated hours of the day, some of their number might be present to meet any of the poor who should desire an interview, or where the friends of this Ministry might refer cases for investigation. This Office has enabled the Ministers to carry on their labors more harmoniously and systematically, while it has not prevented the Ministers from spending most of their time in making personal visits among the poor. The Executive Committee are convinced, that this Office has been useful;

and that, with proper precautions, it may continue greatly to aid the objects of the Ministry. It is under the guidance of the Executive Committee, and is open to every improvement which wisdom and experience can suggest.

There have been 1,400 applications at this Office within the last four months. Many have been referred to such societies as appeared most appropriate to meet their wants; while all such cases as seemed to come under the proper care of this Ministry have been visited; and not a few of the cases have proved deeply interesting in their character. Whatever may be said of this Office (and its arrangements are open to improvement), it has never been the desire of the Committee, or of the Ministers at Large, to make it a mere channel for temporal relief; but that this should always be considered as secondary to spiritual ends.

The Ministers at Large have given particular attention to vagrant and truant children, and have, in many cases, used successful means of leading them to habits of industry and virtue.

The Jail, Alms House, Hospital, and institutions of charity, have also been frequently visited.

The Committee would also state in this connection, that, by a vote, the several Ministers at Large were requested to keep a daily journal. And this was done by Messrs. Ware, Bigelow, Burton, and Cruft; and in these journals (in which is given an account of the manner in which each day has been occupied, with a statement of all interesting cases and facts) there is the strongest evidence of arduous labor, and the most convincing proof that that labor was wisely directed. The Committee believe, that the most doubtful (if there are any who doubt upon this subject) could not peruse these journals, without being

deeply impressed with the exceeding importance of this Ministry.

Thus far your Committee have spoken principally of this Ministry as connected with Visiting. They look upon the addition of laborers to this field, of such as give their time chiefly or wholly to this particular duty, as very important. Not that they undervalue the use of chapels, and the necessity of preaching, or that they would desire the one to conflict with the other: but the Committee believe, that, in a large city, there is ample room for both; and that some ministers may be well qualified for usefulness as visitors, who would not be successful in preaching. They are therefore convinced, that, while the chapels should be sustained and considered as central points of influence, and of the utmost importance to the perfect fulfilment of this Ministry, there is also a work to be accomplished by visiting missionaries, who shall gather "neighborhood meetings," and speak in the sick room and the private dwelling; and that those who have chapels, and those who have not, should co-operate with one another, and act harmoniously together,—which your Committee are satisfied, by the past year's experience, may be done to great advantage.

The chapels have been looked upon with unabated interest. The Rev. Mr. Cruft has 112 families who regularly attend his preaching, and 150 children are connected with his school. With the chapel in Pitts-street, there are now connected 250 families; and about 50 teachers and 250 children are connected with the Sunday-school. These chapels have not only their Sunday-schools, but sewing schools, libraries, social meetings, and other means of improvement. Of the 250 families connected with the Pitts-street Chapel, seven are Irish, five English, three

Germans, one Scotch, one French, one Pole, one African, and 230 Americans. There are 70 families who from time to time are absolutely in need of temporal aid, while 180 families obtain only enough to supply their pressing daily wants.

There have been in the Sunday-school connected with the Pitts-street Chapel, since it was first opened, more than 3,000 children who have received instruction. There have been connected with both schools many of the most intelligent members of our churches, who have devoted themselves with unwearied assiduity to their Christian labors.

The Rev. Messrs. Cruft and Winkley have been most successful in their public ministrations, and many have been added both to their congregations and their communions.

Such are some of the means which have been employed for the relief of the destitute, and the instruction and elevation of the poor in our community.

One year ago last March, the Rev. William Ware became associated with the Fraternity as a visitor to the poor. During the greater part of the year, he has devoted much of his time in this way; and though his health has not permitted him to labor as incessantly as the other gentlemen have done, yet he has undertaken every thing which his strength would allow, and has continued to feel a deep interest in the work. It has been a source of gratification, that this Ministry has had the advantage of his experience and good judgment. We regret to add, that, on account of his health, Mr. Ware has been obliged to resign his place, and this week has sailed for the Mediterranean. It is to be hoped, that, upon his return, he may resume his labors, and again give the Fraternity the benefit of his important services.

During the past season, the late Miss Oxnard left the liberal bequest of five thousand dollars to this institution, which will prove a valuable assistance in carrying forward the objects for which we are associated. By a vote of the Corporation, this sum has been properly invested, and the annual interest alone will be used to aid the current expenses of the society.

Deeply impressed with the importance of this Ministry, and anxious that its operations should be more nearly commensurate with the pecuniary ability of our churches and the real wants of this growing city, the Executive Committee invited other laborers into the field. In taking this step, they were conscious that the current expenses would be materially increased; but they had entire faith, that the public, who had always shown a deep interest in this institution, would support them in carrying out their plans, and cheerfully contribute whatever additional funds might be required. The Corporation sanctioned their proceedings, and took measures to increase the contributions of the several societies; but (probably in a great measure owing to the depressed condition of monetary affairs in the community) the result of these measures has not corresponded with their expectations, or the necessities of the case. Some societies have contributed more, and some less, than on former years, — the aggregate being about the same; but this has not been sufficient to meet the increased expense of the Ministry. The most careful consideration has been given to the present position and prospects of the Fraternity; and it has been felt that the number of ministers employed ought not to be lessened, or the sphere of operations narrowed. Still, under the present condition of things, after having made various efforts, it has been considered an act of duty to inform one of the

ministers, that it would probably not be in the power of the Fraternity to re-engage his services after the end of the present financial year; which year has now come to its close. The question is still before the Fraternity, whether a sufficient sum can be secured to sustain this Ministry in its important operations, and maintain its present usefulness. It can hardly be questioned, that the Associated Churches have it in their power to remove every embarrassment; and the Committee feel assured, that the several Branches of this Fraternity will make every reasonable effort to give the Ministry at Large that generous support which it so abundantly deserves.

All which is respectfully submitted.

R. C. WATERSTON, *Secretary.*

DR. BIGELOW'S THIRD ANNUAL REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches.

Gentlemen, — In presenting this my Third Annual Report, I am somewhat embarrassed, from a variety of materials, in determining the selection. A synopsis, indeed, of my employments during the past year may be given in few words; but the observations made and impressions formed, together with some suggestions proper to be offered, would require more space. If spread out in full, they might tempt me beyond the limits appropriate to a communication of this nature. I shall first state the former; and in passing, next, to the latter, shall endeavor to speak with all the conciseness practicable.

My special business as Visiting Missionary to the families of the poor, has occupied much the largest portion of my time. In the discharge of this duty, my calls have been distributed among some four hundred dwellings, in which my reception, never unkind, has been generally marked with a cordial welcome. The number of my visits for eleven months and a half — viz. to the date of making up this report — has exceeded thirty-one hundred; being a thousand more than the aggregate of the antecedent year, a month of which was then lost by sickness.* During the present year, though experiencing at times a lassitude inviting brief respites from toil, through a kind Providence I have not been disabled from my work by one day's bodily indisposition. I have preached on nearly one-third of the Sundays, either in church, hall, or chapel; and the other Sabbaths have for the most part been devoted to domiciliary visitations, with religious offices, in the abodes of poverty, sickness, and age. Occasionally, on secular days, I have held religious exercises in private homes, — not always where prayer was wont to be made, but where its note was seldom lifted, and God was forgotten or dishonored. In my visits, I took the Bible for my companion, and the Tract for its ally; distributions of the latter having been made as circumstances invited, and opportunities called for.

My visits have not been confined to private abodes, or the homes of the wretched. They have embraced the sick in hospitals and inmates of prisons, and the various public institutions for the relief of suffering. Among

* The exact number of my visits from April 1, 1847, to Mar. 15, 1848, was 3,118. From the middle to the last of March, 91 additional visits were registered; making the total for the year, 3,209.

them, the establishments at South Boston — including the House of Industry with its hospitals, the House of Reformation, and the Lunatic department — have been objects of attention. Several visits have also been made to the House of Correction, and upwards of thirty to the City Jail. According to my custom, the Criminal Courts have at various times been attended, both for the sake of watching the course of justice, and witnessing the dark phases of character in some of its saddest, yet instructive, aspects, there so frequently exhibited; likewise for seeking opportunities to benefit, in all ways practicable, the unfortunate objects brought under the scrutiny or sentence of the law. Add to this, my daily attendance at the Office of the Ministry at Large, with the frequent demands on my time by visitors and applicants of all sorts in the little intervals of leisure at home, and an estimate may be formed of the nature and amount of my employments and avocations.

Such, in general, has been my work in the province assigned me. In proceeding, secondly, to some details and observations, I will speak first of the Central Office of the Ministry at Large. The opening of this, dating back to December, 1846, added to the variety of my labors, in common with some of my brethren; but, by helping to extend the field of our operations, and assisting us to collect and combine the fruits of our observations, it has enabled us to act more systematically, and to carry out on a broader scale the plan of our mission, as a **MINISTRY AT LARGE**.

The advantages anticipated from the arrangement, allowing for the defects natural to an experiment and susceptible of correction, have been encouragingly realized. Any personal or incidental inconveniences experi-

enced have not shaken my conviction of the utility and expediency of the plan of the establishment.

The benefits of the Office have been shared by the public as well as ourselves. By means of the ticket system, with our division of districts, all doubtful cases of indigence referred to our Office have been duly investigated; and, if found worthy, relieved by the responsible person, or reported back to the inquirers as fit subjects for their charities. The undeserving, on the other hand, have been exposed, and due notice, whenever requisite, given in the proper quarters to guard from future impositions. Among the inconveniences intimated as incident to our plan of operations, a prominent one has been the reference to us of classes of foreign paupers often in the lowest stages of destitution, who could not fall under our Ministry as a religious institution, and whose physical wants, collectively, were beyond our means of supply. But here, aside from a partial relief never withheld after a satisfactory examination of circumstances, information has been given, directing such persons to other means of help in the public charities provided to meet their conditions. In this respect, we think it not among the least recommendations of our Office, that it has opened a central place of intelligence useful alike to rich and poor, — one accessible in no other quarter, and demanded by the wants and necessities of the times.

Occasionally, again, from the most unpromising subjects brought to notice among the numerous mendicants who have found their way to our Office, cases of interest have turned up, well meriting the kindest consideration. Where at first, peradventure, we had looked only for stolid ignorance and helpless imbecility, closer scrutiny has unfolded improvable elements, which, awakened by tenderness stimulating self-effort, have sprung up into new and

beautiful development; and, in no long time, the being's self, his home and household, have evinced a change as pleasing as marvellous. I allude to examples among the foreign, Catholic poor, too often the subjects of contemptuous sneers and popular aversion, — instances of which might be here readily cited, were there space for the details.

But the benefits of our Office have been by no means restricted to the poor of foreign importation. They have been shared by others of home extraction; a very considerable proportion of all on my personal visiting list being native to our soil, but reduced to straits by a variety of self-entailed or unavoidable misfortunes.

The number of applicants for aid in some kind, presented at our Office in person or by ticket, during the past four months, has been about fourteen hundred. A part of them were old acquaintances. Making due allowance on this score, the number altogether brought before us since the adoption of the ticket system is computed at two thousand, the proportion of cases having much increased during the last winter. They have all received attention in some way, by kindly hearing, counsel, direction, visits, or alms, as their needs called for; and, as already remarked, communications have been made to the referring parties, always when expedient, on the subject of their merits.

To meet the urgent calls on our charities naturally multiplied with the return of the winter months, we addressed in December a circular appeal to the benevolent in our city. It was generously responded to. Our receipts in the month next following considerably exceeded the entire amount from the same source for the whole previous year. Our poor's purse has since received en-

couraging additions, and the circle of our charities been proportionably enlarged.

The relief of the outward necessities of the poor has ever been a part—incidental or otherwise—yet still a legitimate part of the functions of our Ministry. It was so from the beginning; the plan of the “Tuckerman Circle” having been set on foot, in the outset, under sanction of the venerated man whose name it bears, expressly in aid of the charities of this mission as a ministering handmaid to the poor. The average supplies from the last source—which are altogether voluntary, yet annually renewed like the gentle beneficence of the seasons—have varied little for a series of years. But, whilst the poor were multiplying, their wants becoming better known, and more agents employed and sent forth to minister to their welfare, it was necessary that new springs of bounty should be opened, commensurate with the novel exigencies. It was further obvious, that, if the receipts of societies long established kept to their old tidemark,—at least, not exceeding the limit,—while the number of suffering objects, and of course that of claimants for charity, was fast increasing, new means must be devised to meet the growing demands. Then, again, if our city appropriations kept not pace with this altered state of things, private liberality must be taxed in some shape to supply the deficiency. For the poor—“always with us,” and of late more crowding and craving than ever—are cast upon us as a care by the Being who “made of one blood all the nations of men,” and who will not hold us guiltless if we suffer any of his children to perish from hunger, cold, or nakedness.

And what were the facts? It was found, that, whereas the gross amount of the city’s expenditures for the poor

in the year 1840, including all the disbursements by the Board of Overseers, and the cost of supporting the Houses of Industry and Reformation, together with the Lunatic Hospital, reached the sum of \$63,500, the appropriations for the year 1847-8, for the self-same objects (excluding the Deer Isle establishments), had only advanced to \$76,000, or but \$12,500 more. The population of Boston, meanwhile, had advanced fifty per cent, and the number of its poor in a still larger ratio.* Was it presumable from these facts, that adequate provision of a public nature was made for the indigent classes amongst us; — that, if \$63,500 were requisite for the poor of a population of 85,000 inhabitants, the sum of \$76,000 was a fair proportion when the city numbered 40,000 more people; and of these an unprecedented ratio in the lowest states of destitution? To my mind, it was evident that private munificence must be taxed to compensate the difference, (either acting as its own almoner, or operating through associate agencies); else the wretched, starving crowds in our midst must take to the pavement, and go begging for bread from door to door. Such an alternative — rebuked by our laws, by our social usages, and every consideration of good order, good policy, and humanity — we could not but deprecate. So far as our influence could avail, we have felt bound to exert it, to

* The population of Boston in 1840 was 85,000; in 1845, 114,366; in 1847 (by best estimates), 125,000.

Of the great outlay for Deer Isle (namely, \$65,000), more than half of it, viz. \$36,000, has been paid for Hospital buildings and other fixtures. The expense of the whole, too, is expected to be saved to the city by being offsetted by the receipts on alien passengers, amounting, for the year ending March 1, 1848, to \$64,662.77.

check the mischief. The better to accomplish it, help was needed from all our philanthropic societies; and more of public patronage, too, was wanted for the enlargement of their beneficent operations. There was work for all; and, should all engage in it, and co-operate in the spirit of harmony, no fear need be had of overdoing in the matter. Yet, if others were listless, we could not rest idle. If they kept aground, or riding at their old anchorage, we felt it necessary to quit our moorings, and, spreading our canvas, to invite a favoring gale. If we caught it, was there cause for jealousy? If we wrought more earnestly, should we look for coldness? If, in laboring with increasing diligence in our walk, — feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, cheering the disconsolate, — we derelicted from no other duty, but sought to unite on a broader scale the twofold interests of piety and charity, we might claim no credit for so plain an obligation, yet should hope to escape censure.

In short, from the stand we took and the appeal we published, we endeavored, with no abandonment of other appropriate objects, to make the Ministry at Large an agency of more comprehensive action, and to adapt it to the new and urgent necessities of the day. We wished to employ it as a means for the better discrimination of objects, and a channel for the broader diffusion of the streams of charity. A body of men intimately conversant with the conditions of the poor; familiar with their habits and localities; taught, with due sympathy for genuine distress, the lessons of experience and duty of caution, and thus to distinguish betwixt the real and artificial in signs of wretchedness, — such an order of men would be quite as likely to apply wisely and well the delegated bounty of the rich to the wants of the necessitous, as mere

official functionaries, civic or otherwise, whose concern in the matter is often but secondary to other and personal engagements, — perhaps the perplexities of a business all foreign and engrossing. Accordingly, we were impelled to proffer our aid to those who might choose it, as assistant almoners to the poor and suffering; and, that we might go to the latter less straitened in means, we publicly appealed in their behalf to the sympathies of the benevolent.*

In taking such step, did we “stretch ourselves beyond our measure”? Did we transcend our own province, or trench on the just prerogatives of others? At a time when a new and energetic movement was called for by all the friends of the poor to arrest an evil already great, and daily becoming more formidable; when the cry of distress was coming up to us from all quarters of the city; when pauperism was seen condensing as a mighty mischief, difficult even now to be wisely treated, and threatening, if neglected, ere long to prove altogether unmanageable; when our benevolent citizens were being constantly assailed at their doors, their shops, or their warehouses, by squalid mendicants seeking alms, yet uncertain, if pity moved, whether to extend or stay the helping hand; — under these circumstances, in stepping forth to help to grapple with an evil of such character and magnitude, could we count upon objections, — on the cold looks of brethren professedly engaged in a common cause, — or the charge of self-assumption, in aspiring to be monopolists of the favor and patronage of the public?

* The amount of our cash receipts for poor's purse, independently of the Tuckerman donations, since the issue of our circular in December, has been \$1,514.50.

We say again, in this field of philanthropy, there is work for all; — work for every one who has caught the Master's spirit, and who sympathizes with his suffering members. There is little danger here of overdoing. And we venture to affirm, that, whilst scrupulously guarding, as we should, against a conversion of the Ministry at Large into a mere eleemosynary machine, — keeping in view the higher and holier ends for which it was created, as a ministry for souls, — nevertheless, if restricted absolutely to the last, we make it a one-sided charity of quite suspicious disinterestedness. For my own part, always heeding the command, “As ye go, preach,” yet, in my intercourse with the poor, — when speaking to them of the “true riches,” exhorting them to “hunger and thirst after righteousness,” and pointing in recompense to the “bread and waters of life,” — notwithstanding, with respect to things temporal — that anxious, doubting, aching solicitude, “what they shall eat or drink, or wherewithal be clothed?” — my language is: “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things;” and He, your Father, has stirred up the hearts of His loving children, those more favored and prosperous than yourselves, the men of wealth, the affluent and benevolent of either sex, — yes, God has stirred them up in this good city to provide for your outward comfort, even “the things which are needful for the body.” But “seek first” — seek *foremost* — “the kingdom of God,” and then trust His Providence which never fails, that “all these things shall be added unto you.” He will raise up comforters and helpers for you through your mortal pilgrimage; and, in life and death, the Friend will be nigh that “cleaveth closer than a brother,” — born to redeem, and bless, and save.

The generous sympathy of which I have spoken, on the part of the rich, for the privations of indigence, — a sympathy always so honorably characteristic of our beloved city, — is commended by considerations of sound wisdom, as well as humanity. The broad contrasts presented by the social conditions existing in a community where an equality of political rights is ostensibly recognized, — the wide extremes of poverty and riches growing daily more marked and palpable in our metropolis, — cannot fail to be painfully noticed as well as felt by the less favored classes, and to provoke in some bosoms feelings of repining, envying, and hate. On the other hand, the proofs of kindly good-will, shown by the generous offerings of the wealthy on the shrine of charity, tend to soften or subdue such feelings, and awaken better tempers in the heart. The intervention, besides, of an order of men, by means of the Ministry at Large, in communication at once with the rich and the poor, making known the wants and feelings of the one, and conveying back the sympathies and benefactions of the other, is an institution not lightly to be valued, if on no other grounds, yet for its influence among the conservative elements of society.

And truly, the sufferings in the lot of penury, as often witnessed around us, are enough to melt the heart to tenderest pity. The mildness of the past winter ameliorated very materially the rigor of the hardships of the poor; but a multitude, in the strife with want, were obliged to wage, as they still must, a stern battle with the foe. It is not easy to picture to minds unacquainted with the spectacle, the wretchedness of scenes familiar to the eye of the official visitor to the poor. They are chiefly found, as might be supposed, in the crowded quarters of the stranger poor, who are thrown

amongst us from other climes. But not always or only there. The saddest destitution of the poor, suffering exile, if living in sobriety, true to the vow he pledged as a Father Matthew disciple, — and there are great numbers of such in our midst, — I say, the saddest destitution of that poor man's dwelling is not comparable to the rayless wretchedness of the drunkard's home — native or alien — from the curse of intemperance. His guilty indulgences, his cruelties, his frantic recklessness, may make it more intolerable by his personal presence; but, should he abandon his household, past consequences may not be averted. Want may be still there; sickness may follow; and the sorrows of seared hopes and crushed hearts, never to be healed, — all may remain in that forsaken home. With the failure of other refuge, the gloomy vision of the alms-house, as the only alternative of future shelter in their desolation, will rise up to affright and haunt their waking and their sleeping hours.

It is scarcely credible what sacrifices are oft submitted to, what wants are endured, what miseries are borne, to keep that terror at bay. The suffering and conflict are shared with like torturing apprehension and many a self-sacrifice, short of the last extremity, by others who are left destitute; namely, by the virtuous poor in society reduced to poverty through unavoidable calamities. To them a home in the Poor House has become associated with doubly revolting images, not only by the congregating within its walls of so many alien paupers collected in all their wretchedness, — squalid, diseased, rude, vicious, — but from distrust of the permanency of a residence, if consented to, *there*, on account of the threatened removal of the institution itself (a change most earnestly to be deprecated) to some other and unknown quarter. Again, the apprehen-

sion, however unfounded, is very generally shared, of the hazard of no certain repose being assured to their poor bodies, in the only asylum hoped for after death, if it overtake them there. For these causes, — and they need not excite surprise, — the poor, for the most part, and especially of the better sort from among ourselves, will struggle to the very verge of starvation, before tolerating the idea of a removal to the public retreat provided at South Boston. It may partly explain the fact otherwise so strange (making due allowance for the Deer Isle accommodations), that, despite the large increase of pauperism in our city during the past twelvemonth, the weekly returns through the winter have actually shown a diminution of the number of inmates in the South Boston Poor House, compared with the correspondent periods of the previous year, on an average of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred souls. The consequence has been a more urgent demand for out-door relief from some source ; and, beyond the slender allowance to individuals on this score made by the City Overseers, the residue was to be sought from private or associate charities.

To return to the class of foreigners : — Of the many thousands of these brought to our port in the course of the last year, great numbers, particularly among the arrivals near the close of the season, unable to find employment or transportation elsewhere, have continued to sojourn amongst us. Landing in destitution, often set down in our midst without one penny in store, the question, how they should live, was more easily put than solved. An opinion, by the way, popularly entertained, of their shipment here at the cost of parishes, landlords, or work-house guardians abroad, has not been borne out by the results of my inquiries. There is, I apprehend, even in moneyed

England, too pressing a demand for funds nearer home, to be lavished in such a way. I have not met, during the last year, with a single authentic instance of involuntary pauper importation; that is, the consignment here of a family or an individual at *public* foreign charge. The history of all is substantially the same. They gather up, and convert their little store into the means of defraying the expenses of a voyage hither; or they are helped by kindred, often through remittances despatched from this country, and furnished as loans on the contingency of future ability to repay. On their arrival in port, they most commonly (I speak of the Irish poor) have not the wherewithal to purchase the first day's provision. In this extremity, they are taken in charge by older comers, usually by some former acquaintances or *whilom* neighbors in their fatherland. If haply they know none such, they are provided for awhile by the hospitalities of their fellow-countrymen in general.

No people are more prodigal of good offices in like sort, certainly in cases of extremity, than the poor Irish; none ever acted more closely on the apostolic maxim, to "bear one another's burdens." And I hazard the opinion, not lightly formed, that even in Boston, — a city so famed for its philanthropy, — the amount of voluntary benefactions for the poor in all other quarters is not only *relatively* surpassed, but absolutely well nigh matched, by the measure of charities raised, and self-sacrifices imposed, for mutual relief (I mean, in actual sum total), which are cheerfully submitted to by this remarkable people. It is due to them to add, that, making fair allowances for exceptions, — considering, too, their condition and frequent dire necessities, — they are not particularly chargeable with the vice of alms-craving from the love of it; that is,

through preference for the "bread of idleness." Their cry is loudest for work, — more anxious for this, where the hope of it exists, than for the boon of meat. Give them this; give them labor; give them honest employment for their hands; and, so long as it lasts, or a balance of earnings is left in store, they will seldom ask or beg for more. And when we remember their sturdy toil, and the advantages thence accruing to the public weal, who will deny that they give back an ample equivalent for all the bounty they receive, or say that the State is not enriched quite as fast as the individual?

During the winter before last, I was brought into contact with a number of fresh immigrants, some of them with large households; and had facilities for a close observation of their character and habits. They had landed here about the beginning of the cold season. To their other privations were superadded, shortly after, in the case of several, the losses of their effects by the disastrous fire in Haverhill-street. It left them in complete destitution. As one of the distributing Committee, I was made their special almoner. They and others remained a charge on my hands till quite into spring. All the while, they implored work. At length it offered, the "hope deferred" being joyfully realized. The men found employment chiefly on the water-works; the young women, situations in families. Children were put to school; mothers and wives, with their little ones, kept by the "stuff." Comfort began to visit those families. They earned their daily bread, and were happy. Labor sweetened the repast. Soon were their hands more than sufficient for their necessities. They laid by some little savings in forecast against a "rainy day." And, during the past winter, notwithstanding the long suspension of out-door labors, but two

of those families have returned to me for assistance in any sort, and that only occasionally in trifling amounts. Collectively, they have proved valuable producers; and (not to speak too largely) the city, I doubt not, has gained fourfold at least in the fruits of their honest toils, compared with all the succors from charity of which they had been the recipients.

From these remarks, I would not be understood as implying a particular admiration of the Irish character, or a particular gratification at the mighty influx of Irish population to our shores. But I cannot refuse them my sympathies. I know the hardships, the cruel hardships, from which they flee. I know the uses which they subserve in our community; that, by their indomitable toil and industry, the many noble works are accomplished so beneficial to the public, of which we all are justly proud. They are the Gibeonites in our Israel, — “the hewers of wood, and drawers of water,” — our carriers and delvers, — without whom the gigantic improvements and enterprises now achieved every *lustre* of years would be retarded through the space of a generation. And, though the masses be rude and unlovely, individual characters, as before observed, are occasionally discovered among them, distinguished for brightness and beauty. It is a washing for diamonds. Amid the coarse gravel, we may sometimes light upon “gems of purest ray serene,” enough to repay the labor expended, and to animate a fresh search.

An interesting case may be mentioned, not as most marked, but one of the more recent brought under my observation. It is that of a woman whom I was called to visit a few weeks since, reported in great want. She had arrived in Boston with a company of passengers landed last season. Her husband had died in Hospital, soon

after the expiration of the voyage; and there, herself and two little ones had almost sunk under the same cruel fever. Their means were exhausted by the expenses of transportation; and alone, in a land of strangers, — whose soil only offered to her dear partner the asylum of a poor grave, — this stricken mother, with her tender offspring, was left to seek, she knew not where, the hidden means of support.

A family long settled here, and who had known her in better days, lent the shelter of an attic in a house they partly occupied, and fed her from the little they might spare from their slender store. The woman, too frail for hard toil but not unskilled with a needle, sought employment in that line. She went from shop to shop in unavailing search for days, nay, weeks. At length some slop-work offered, — a few coarse pants to make up, at eight cents a pair. When I visited her, she was busied on the work. It was a chance stint, and nothing was promised beyond. Her children were about her; — the elder, a sweet boy of four; the younger, a weakly little girl, looking pallid and wan; both clad in clean but scanty attire. She was a woman of engaging appearance, though with a countenance “sicklied o’er with the pale cast” of grief, wearing an expression tender, touching, mournful. There was an air, too, of natural softness and quiet dignity in her look and manner, that, joined to the mingled lines of care, sorrow, and pious resignation traced on her pale features, could not fail to inspire feelings of respect. She had seen some twenty-eight summers; rather, might I say, the storms of as many *winters* had beat upon her brow; and now, a sad exile, afar from the land of her birth, — feeble, lone, widowed, — she sat at her weary toil, to earn a scanty morsel to feed her hungry little ones.

The room, like its inmates, was tidy so far as practicable ; but every thing betokened the dreariest poverty. On one side was the bed, with its thin covering ; and around were a sitting stool, an old chest, a low pine table, and in a corner a barrel, — alas ! all empty of meal, but used as a box for the receptacle of loose articles. There was a fireplace, but no stove ; and, on the broken hearth, some bricks were laid, to take the place of andirons, whereon were smoking two or three little brands. The morning was cold ; the wind, without, blustering ; and the solitary window of the chamber creaked and rattled to the keen blast.

The poor woman received my visit kindly, but with a flush of seeming surprise, so seldom had a stranger foot crossed her secluded threshold. She told me her story, enough of which has been given in what precedes ; but the closing remark must not be omitted. Having spoken of her bitter disappointments when driven from famine at home, expecting to find a land of plenty here, she had experienced only want, suffering, sickness, and bereavement ; — “ I see,” said she, after a pause, her tears the while coursing silently down her pallid cheek, — “ *I see that there is no flying from the hand of the Almighty.*” — “ True, my good woman,” was the quick response ; “ true, you have said rightly : there is *no* flying from the hand of the Almighty, — no flying from his *supporting*, as well as chastening hand, — no flying from the shelter of his parental wing. God is here as surely as in your native land. He is the God of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. He will care for you, and keep your little ones. Trust in *him*, and you shall yet be blest.” — She listened to my words of comfort. Hope revived at the proffer of present succor, and the promise of future aid.

A supply of necessaries for her immediate wants was forthwith furnished, and employment for her needle obtained soon after in a new quarter. A wealthy and liberal friend, to whom I made report of the case, visited her, and actively interested himself in the poor creature's welfare. Meeting him a few days later, he exclaimed, — "Why, Mrs. ——— is a saint. Leave her in my hands. I will provide for her, and her poor orphans." And he has done it: Blessings upon his generous soul!

One word more in regard to this case; for the remark is applicable to others similarly situated. This poor sufferer, ere my visit, had received no public assistance from any quarter. Application had been made by a kind neighbor in her behalf to the overseer of the ward; but aid was refused on the ground, that "she was a new comer," — a plea the force of which I have yet to learn. For, the new comer is one who especially needs the fostering hand of charity. Some present help, in the shape of fuel or stores, occasionally administered (with the assistance of private benevolence), may carry a family comfortably through the inclement months. At least, they may save it from cruel distress, till the return of a more genial season, which, bringing a call for some of the thousand industrial occupations of life, may discharge the recipient from the necessity of longer dependence.

The distress so prevalent among the laboring classes in the winter months, by the usual suspension of public works and the improvements undertaken by private enterprise and capital, suggests the hope that something may be done hereafter to abate, if not completely remedy, the evil. In the crisis of severest cold, the ice business, which is becoming annually more important, and already employing some hundreds, perhaps a thousand hands about the lakes

of our vicinity, — chiefly taken from the city, and engaged in the cutting, transport, and storage of the article, — this demand, do I say, falling at a time when most needed, produces a partial, kindly relief in the labor market. But might not the city find it advantageous, on its own account, to give or continue employment to many more hands, by setting them to work on the public lands, filling up flats, extending, opening, or improving new avenues; thus only anticipating improvements which the wants of a few years must render imperative? It seems to me, that, by these or similar methods, whereby the city should be no loser, but, contrarily, a gainer, many of the laboring poor might be still kept usefully occupied during most, at least, of the inclement season; and at fairly remunerative, though lesser rates of compensation than at other times. Better this, than to be taxed for the support of unemployed labor that offers no equivalent, — better, than to leave men in conditions of compulsory idleness, so likely to sink them into a state of degrading dependence, or habits of vice and mischief.

I have spoken of the Jail, and my visits to it on missions of charity. Every reasonable facility for holding interviews with the prisoners, consistent with the nature of the place, has been afforded me by the keeper and his assistants. But the construction of the edifice, its interior arrangements, and the usually overcrowded state of the cells, have interposed, and must continue to interpose, serious obstacles to endeavors, however anxiously plied, to work a radical reform, personally, on any of the tenants. Obviously, where several of different ages, characters, and offences, are lodged in the same apartment, it is scarcely possible for human instrumentality, through want of the necessary isolation, to plead with individual hearts. For, if

one be touched and the conscience be roused, and his soul melts under the wholesome influence, the good impression is almost sure to be sneered away by the jests of companions.

At my visits to the jail, my attention has been mostly turned to the young. Of them it is painful to state, that an uncommonly large proportion — some, literally, in the tender age of childhood — have been incarcerated in the Leveret-street Prison during the last year. In cases where their terms of confinement were short, by following them up subsequently, seeing them replaced at school, or put out (as in several instances) to some useful employments, keeping an eye also from time to time on their after-steps, — in a few such cases, the result has been encouraging. But in general, as now constituted, the influences and tendencies consequent upon a confinement in the Leveret-street jail are altogether in a contrary direction. And I must bear my testimony against it as a moral pest-house. Practically, it is a seminary (and the worse because *legalized*), an actual seminary of vice, — far more so, certainly, than a school of moral reform. And the youth who enters it, having taken but the very first step in delinquency, is in danger, on quitting its walls, of graduating a reckless candidate for crime.

I trust that the time is not distant, when a prison, combining the many modern improvements which experience and observation, under the guiding lights of the soundest philanthropy, have shown to be both sage and practicable, will be reared up in our midst; and that the present structure will no longer remain an opprobrium of our city and of our times.

An old existing defect in this prison — the want of a suitable library of cheap instructive books for the use of

the inmates — is much to be lamented. It was not always so. Many years ago, when the House of Correction was in the same yard, there was a collection of volumes expressly provided for the benefit of the convicts and prisoners generally. In course of time, the books were defaced, torn, and occasionally lost. Their places were not supplied, and the plan of a library seems silently to have been abandoned.* For the preservation of the books, should the project be renewed, some system of care and oversight must be devised, and the responsibility be vested in a proper officer. I cannot doubt that it is altogether feasible. Books, good books, would not only serve to lighten the otherwise intolerable tedium of confinement, but might prove efficient helps in the work of personal reform. It should be added, that the cells of the Leveret jail are provided with bibles. The books, papers, and tracts, which I have left from time to time with the prisoners, have been received with apparent avidity.

Of the causes of crime, which are many and various, I may not now speak. A volume would hardly suffice for the enumeration. I will confine myself to one of the nursing sources of social mischief, shedding a blight on good manners and good morals among the poorer classes, originating from the wretched abodes which they are compelled to occupy. How, when a family of several members, including both sexes and perhaps all ages, is obliged, as is frequently the case, to tenant a single apartment, — literally herding together, — eating, washing, sleeping, dressing, all within the walls of the same narrow room, — the house itself, from cellar to attic, filled with families of lodgers of like description, — the building, moreover,

* Vide Rev. Dr. Jenks's Seventh Annual Report, pp. 36, 37.

wedged very likely within a close dirty lane or court; ill-ventilated and dim-lighted, without air, without water, save what is impure and insalubrious; — how, when a family thus lives and cohabits, the household decorums, with the kindred virtues allied therewith, can be expected to strike root and grow and flourish, passes my comprehension.

It is usual to speak of the juvenile delinquencies so rife in these times, as consequences of the out-door, vagrant habits of children. “Let them be kept at home,” we hear it said: “Let them be kept at home, when not at school or at work; nor be suffered to run idle in our streets; and mischiefs will cease, together with all those petty vices, — the fruitful parents of crime, — engendered by ‘evil communications,’ the bane of good morals.”

But what, in a thousand cases, are the homes and firesides, whither such children would be remanded? What, but the haunts, of all others, from which, by an instinct of nature, they would fain flee? For they crave the pure air and the bright light of day; and any spot to them is preferable to the gloom, discomfort, and wretchedness of home. Nay, more, however bad may be the moral exposure of a child abroad in a city’s thoroughfares, and amid the corrupting influences incident thereto, it can scarcely be more so (how should it be?) than in many a family home, where drunkenness and brawls, profaneness, indecency, sabbath-breaking, and other shameless vices, are found to prevail. Could any thing more surely pervert the nature of a child; or sins more foul or festering be capable of poisoning and defiling elsewhere? Deeds which shun the light naturally court such retreats; and to remedy, nay unkennel, some of the worst vices of our poor adult population, you must dislodge them from their hid-

ing places, give them other homes, and pour the sunshine of day upon their new and better habitations.

Let me add the remarks of a clever English writer on this subject : *

“ Quitting the fields and flowers, the fresh air and pleasant skies, let us enter some close tenement, some narrow lodging, perhaps a single chamber for a whole family, — dark, dirty, noisome, pestilential, — the occupiers in rags, and faint for want of food.

“ I stay not to observe, that the bird fares better in its nest ; the bee, in its hive. Instead of contrasting mankind with the brute creation, I ask you to contrast this picture with the portrait of a Christian as set before you in God’s word ; — I ask you whether the beauties of the Christian character are likely to flourish in such an atmosphere as this ? Will a man take no thought for the morrow, who has no means of making provision for to-morrow’s meal ? Is cheerfulness or joyfulness easy of attainment under the pressure of cold and hunger ? Can modesty bloom where common decency is impracticable ? Under the boundless power of God’s grace, exceptions may occur ; and marvellous instances undoubtedly there are of a holy life and of a heavenly frame of mind maintained in circumstances the most adverse : but still, such exceptions are extremely rare ; such circumstances *are* most adverse.”

All which is respectfully submitted.

ANDREW BIGELOW.

Boston, March, 1848.

* The Rev. C. Girdlestone, of Staffordshire, England : “ On the Cause and Cure of Abject Poverty.”

MR. BURTON'S FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT.

*To the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity
of Churches.*

Gentlemen, — The past year, as usual, has been spent in various duties appertaining to my vocation. The Ministry at Large, if true to the significance of its title, embraces a wide and diverse field of operations. During the first six months of the past year, I was engaged in investigating the moral condition of the younger portion of the community. The object, according to my own understanding, was to obtain a more extended and minute acquaintance with the habits, the dangers, and the wants of this class of our population, that therefrom new impulse might be given to benevolent action, by which many might be reformed in the incipient stages of evil, and incalculable numbers prevented from entering at all on vicious courses.

A very long and full Report on the subject was presented in October last. In connection with the numerous facts, suggestions were offered for the improvement and safety of young men. As the aforesaid Report is not likely to meet the public eye, I beg leave here briefly to recapitulate some points of it which I deem of great importance, and to which, in some form, I hope the attention, not only of the Committee, but of the Fraternity, and eventually of the public in general, will be directed.

Three modes of influence were named, all of them practical in this city of unequalled wealth, intelligence, and moral power: —

1. Let those men, in far greater numbers, become Sunday School teachers, whose talents and social position would at

once command respect, and whose instructions, personal intercourse, and friendship, would be deemed an honor, as well as a great moral good. Such men receiving our youth at fifteen or sixteen years of age, the period at which they now desert the Sunday School, they might long continue pupils, and thus be restrained from the evil courses which now lead so many to ruin.

2. Let Christians take youthful amusements under their own charge, instead of permitting them to remain in the hands of those who have no interest in their character, except their own gains. Let innocent recreations be provided for children, and let parents also join in them as far as shall be possibly convenient, and there will be saved not only an enormous amount of vice, but also great excesses of expense. This matter, I believe, should be pressed on the virtuous community, indeed on our churches, with all energy and perseverance, until a change shall be effected in the opinions and practice of the professedly religious, and consequently in the habits of the young, and of the thoughtless and extravagant of maturer age.*

3. Let there be established in our city an institution of education, to which our young men can resort during the longer evenings of the year to acquire knowledge, and to develop their intellects, according to leisure; — an institution similar to the Mechanics' Institutes which are springing up in the cities and large towns of England, and through which clerks and apprentices are accomplishing a vast deal of good to themselves. With like advantages, developing new tastes and elevating the whole

* Soon after the Report referred to was presented, Mr. Sawyer's "Plea for Amusements" appeared, in which the subject is discussed at length, and with facts and arguments, in the main, worthy of being considered by every parent.

character, thousands of our own youth would be saved from the temptations and evils with which they are now so thickly surrounded. A plan of an Evening Institute was presented in the afore-mentioned Report: I again ask attention to this plan. I believe that, if so respectable a body of men as the Central Board of the Fraternity of Churches should press the importance of such an institution on the understandings and hearts of the citizens generally, for the improvement and salvation of their clerks, their apprentices, indeed of their own sons, that it would not be long before the noble object would be attained.

At the same time that I was making the investigations alluded to, I attended to all those cases of need, whether of body or of soul, which were presented in the section of the city which, by arrangement with my associates, had been allotted to my care. From October 1st to the present time, I have been more exclusively engaged in ministrations to the poor.

I have not kept a detailed and accurate account of the number of families visited and of visits made, except for about four months of the year past. But, from my list of beneficiaries and from recollection, I infer that I have embraced in my ministry of visitation about two hundred families. This care, in many instances, however, includes only individual members of families. If this shall seem a small number comparatively, I trust that it will be recollected, that, for the first half of the year, no little portion of my time was spent in the special investigation before mentioned.

During the past few months, I have not been able to preach the gospel from house to house, to the extent designed in the original plan of this Ministry, and agree-

able to my own views and wishes : but I have visited the widows and the fatherless ; I have been obliged to practise that gospel which enjoins feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, and ministering to the general comforts of the destitute. The district assigned to my care, extending from State to Beach-street, and from Washington-street to the water, contains probably a more numerous foreign population than any other equal portion of ground in the city. Of course, a very considerable share of my time has been spent among this class of people. Owing to the recent large immigrations, the number of applicants for charity has been much greater than ever before. New individuals were presenting themselves almost every day, and those who had once been assisted applying over and over again for a renewal of aid.

Indeed, a large proportion of my time has been taken up by Irish paupers, over whom I could exercise comparatively little religious influence, on account of their peculiar faith, which they have a right to retain, and which I feel no special call to assail. I may perhaps have contributed to cleanliness and temperance, inasmuch as I have generally refused to aid unless these virtues should be observed. Consequently, I could not seek out the poor of our own country, and to them preach the gospel day after day, early and late, with this burden on my hands ; and this I could not well shake off, such are the eleemosynary arrangements of our institution, which have been made within the last two years. I now refer to the Central Office of the Ministry at Large. This Office has been growing more and more into notice ever since its establishment. In consequence of a circular issued at the beginning of the winter, very particular and wide attention was drawn toward our institution, as a medium of physical

aid to the destitute. In answer to the aforesaid circular, very liberal contributions were made by the wealthy, for the ministers to distribute to the needy, according to their discretion. Therefore, the numerous beggars from door to door, instead of being relieved thereat, were sent to our Office, that we might investigate their cases, and bestow on them, if worthy, a portion of those means which could not be bestowed at the private domicil, because they had been entrusted to us. In return for these liberal donations, we felt under obligation to attend to those wants which they were intended to relieve. Hence my own time and attention have been much occupied as a mere almoner to those on whose souls I could not bestow the highest spiritual benefactions at the same time I supplied bodily wants. I think the Office useful; and I hope it will continue, at least till some great and general arrangement shall take place, by which all our various eleemosynary operations shall be harmonized and perfected, far beyond the present condition of things. My respected associate, who has had the principal supervision of the Office, will be of indispensable importance to its utility. I would by no means have the poor stranger neglected by our institution; but it strikes me, that a female almoner might be employed in connection with this Ministry and this Office, who would be nearly or quite as useful, as far as Catholic pauperism is concerned, as any one of the Ministry at Large, however well it may have been constituted. A female would understand the various wants of families — and they are mostly household wants — better than an almoner of the other sex. And still further, inasmuch as the comfort of women and children, in a large majority of cases, is almost exclusively the subject of investigation and care, the ministrations of a woman would be

most appropriate. She could have access to the ladies of more prosperous families for clothing, and various other supplies, with peculiar facility and success. The labors of Miss Jones and Mrs. Allen, as agents of certain benevolent societies, most convincingly illustrate the idea I have in my mind, by the good judgment with which they are performed, and by their abundant usefulness. As it regards the Protestant poor, a fit and faithful minister, to bear the gospel to them in his heart and on his lips, cannot but be of excellent service. Of my own success and usefulness in this relation, I cannot boast; but I hope my humble endeavors have not been altogether without avail. During the present winter, Protestant American families have been the interesting subjects of visitation, if not in that proportion to others which ought to have been. My Sunday walks have been mostly among these; and they have been walks of pleasantness and of much spiritual satisfaction to myself, and, I hope, of advantage to those among whom they were made. My best day among the poor has been the Sabbath. Still, I feel bound to say, that by far the most efficient moral and religious Ministry is connected with a chapel. Induce people to go to a place of worship, and associate with others in religious services, even but little beyond a decent seeming, and a decided good is accomplished. I need not here prove or illustrate this. There is generally some hope, that, when people have once become regular attendants at public worship, there will be a religious advancement beyond external appearance. The chapel is likely to become the centre of dear and delightful associations, and a frequent and steady means of religious improvement, far beyond that of mere domiciliary visitation, which cannot take place among a numerous charge, except at considerable

intervals. I believe, nevertheless, that a Ministry like my own — one of visitation — can perform an equally valuable service, provided this Ministry, in addition, be permitted to engage extensively in reforms especially affecting the welfare of the city, inasmuch as the hindrances of chapel duty are not in the way.

As for myself, it has been my privilege to operate in a much wider sphere than that of mere visitation, and in a manner which has contented myself; for I have believed, that my humble and peculiar efforts have been, and would still farther be, crowned with a good which could have scarcely been brought about in any other way, although it might have been very much better and more abundantly accomplished by some other individual in my place.

An official letter from a sub-committee of your body has informed me, that, in consequence of a want of means to support the present number of ministers employed by the Fraternity, my service under your direction is very probably to cease with the present financial year. I thank those gentlemen most sincerely, and with heartfelt gratitude, for the kind, feeling terms of their communication, and for the friendly wishes they expressed for my future welfare. If, in obedience to the necessity of the case, I must leave this ministry, it will be with many regrets. I should leave it with deep sorrow, were it not for the faith and the hope, that, under a Divine Providence, I shall still be made useful. I trust that my experience in this work has not been in vain, as it regards the future. I am devoutly thankful to Heaven, that I have been permitted a place in the Ministry at Large, and that I have been continued in it so long. May ample means soon flow into your treasury, and a success greater than ever

crown your measures, and bless the ministers that remain, or that in future may be brought into your service !

With great esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

WARREN BURTON.

March 27, 1848.

MR. CRUFT'S SECOND ANNUAL REPORT,

As Minister of Suffolk-street Chapel.

Under the good providence of God, I have just brought the second year of my Ministry to a close. It has been a year of most profitable experience to myself, and I trust one not entirely unprofitable to the various subjects of my Ministry. It has been a year of most varied and harrassing toil, far surpassing that of the former year, and by far the most laborious of my whole life ; but still a year of conscious joy that I have not labored wholly in vain in the many substantial and visible tokens of confidence I have received. I desire first to thank the great Giver of all good for the abundant measure of health that has been mine, enabling me to be ever faithful at my post in season and out of season, by day and by night (for even then have I been called from my slumbers to visit the sick and the dying).

The number of poor (as must be the united experience of all the city missionaries) has greatly increased during the past year, chiefly owing to the immense influx of foreign immigration. This has added, of course, almost without number, to the labors of the visitor of the poor.

The severest cases of destitution which I have again and again seen, it would be too harrowing to the feelings to attempt to describe. But I have not been conscious of a single one that, through the liberal assistance of others, I have been unable to relieve, and place in a state of comparative ease unknown before. Particularly great has been the amount of distress during the past winter; not, indeed, so much on account of want of fuel (for the season has been one, as all know, providentially mild). But this want is only one of very many with the poor. There has been scarcity of provisions. The prices have been very high. There has been much sickness that has come under my especial observation. The calls, again, for all kinds of labor have been unusually great, and but very few answered. And as usual, and what is most aggravating and peculiarly trying, is the exorbitant price of rents the poor are ever obliged to pay, — out of all proportion with that paid by the more favored classes, — and often, too, for most miserable accommodations, damp, crowded, unhealthy, unventilated cellars and garrets. Surely it is time to be up and *doing*, and sit no longer deliberating as to the expediency of furnishing better tenements for the poor. The moral effect will be fully as great as the physical good to arise from such a measure.

Yet the bodily wants of the poor have not alone been provided for, — though in most cases this is first the all essential. The loaf of bread must be given, before the bread of Heaven can be successfully presented. But, feeling my more important office was to seek and save those that were lost, to relieve rather the moral and spiritual necessities of the poor, — having my misgivings at times whether the Ministry at Large was not becoming too much of an eleemosynary institution it was never originally

designed to be, — I have aimed ever to benefit the moral, social, and religious natures of the poor, to throw them more on their own inward energies, to make them depend more upon themselves, and not upon others and upon alms, — to establish in them habits of economy and thrift. In other words, I have striven to make diligent use of all the many *preventive* means of removing pauperism. Hence, I have employed much time in procuring places of employment for the idle, in bringing the morally exposed under religious influences, circulating the bible and tracts among them, introducing them to places of public worship, &c. I have done what I could, by appeals to the victims and venders of alcoholic drinks (but, ah! with what little success!) to dry up the lava streams of *intemperance*, coursing like a torrent down our streets, — the all-appalling evil of our time, the great source of all the poverty and wretchedness in our midst; causing more sighs and groans to rend the air, more lamentation in homes that otherwise would be happy, more ruin of bodies and souls, than the battle-field, yea, than the blood-red plains of all Mexico have occasioned within the closing year. I have done again what I could to bring under the influence of our public schools and Sunday-schools the vagrant children about our streets, educating only for beggary and crime, and liable ever to fall into the clutches of the police.

This matter of the *moral exposure and neglect of the young* (to which I alluded in my last report) has pressed with no less weight upon my mind with each day's successive observation. Would I could speak as I felt, with trumpet tones, to parents and guardians of youth, and to our city authorities, as to their solemn responsibility in this matter! If nothing else can be done, let civil enact-

ments be made, to check the fast-increasing number of truant boys and girls in our midst.

I may say, I have deemed attention to the *morally exposed children* of our city the more important part of my work; and hence have suffered myself to be officially connected with our public schools, in both departments of instruction — the Grammar and the Primary; having ten schools thus under my more immediate supervision. This consumes, indeed, a large part of my time, exposing me to many interruptions and calls, — as a school-committee man alone knows, — and adds considerably to the number of my visits. Yet, still I have felt I could thus advance much my usefulness, in one of the most important of spheres, the education of the young, especially their moral education, and at the same time better accomplish in the end the sacred trust committed to me as a Minister at Large. My desire ever is to be all things to all *children*, that I may at least save some.

There is no class of vicious or virtuous poor that I have not been, and am not still, connected with. The Central Office has been the means of introducing me to many more such families than otherwise I should have found. I have endeavored ever to be faithful to the calls of the patrons and friends of our Ministry there, being accustomed to spend from half an hour to an hour in attending to such each day. I bear most ready testimony with my colleagues to the usefulness of the Office. I believe it to have done much in its exercise of the preventive means to dry up the sources of pauperism, in the furnishing of places for the unemployed and idle, in putting a check upon vagrancy and street beggary (an occupation, in nine cases out of ten, assumed by the unworthy and by impostors), by turning the streams of charity, ever so ready to flow (as we our-

selves can bear grateful witness) into their more appropriate channels.

In the districting of the city among ourselves, the largest territorial ward has fallen to my charge, so that the range of my walks has greatly increased during the past year. They have extended all west and south of the Worcester Railroad Bridge, bringing me into contact with many families on the South Cove, and then again to the north almost to the Providence Depot, and thence to the Roxbury Line. I have thus become connected with from fifty to a hundred families, in no way belonging to my Chapel Ministry, but all coming most emphatically within the province of the Ministry at Large. As I have ministered to the physical and moral necessities of such, and they have been too far removed from my chapel limits, I have taken good care, as these required, that the different members of their families were introduced to day-schools, to evening-schools, to Sunday-schools, and to places of worship, in their more immediate neighborhoods.

As regards the chapel, I have to state that the attendance on our Sunday worship has quite sensibly increased during the past year. But the fluctuation of families within this period has been greater than I have ever known it before. It is the most discouraging circumstance of my position, as a pastor alone can tell. It is a serious though unavoidable evil, that must affect the visible condition of this Ministry, or at least prevent its matured fruits from being seen. From twenty-five to thirty families have removed during the year from the neighborhood, very many of whom I had deemed my stationary families; with whom, especially with whose children, I had just begun to feel thoroughly acquainted, as to their character and wants, and therefore to be useful

to them, — when I have been told either that they were about to move, or else had already moved without any previous warning. This uncertainty of residence among the new comers into the neighborhood necessarily detracts from that lively interest I would otherwise feel in them. Many know not, in their nomadic state, how long they may abide with us, and therefore manifest themselves little or no reciprocal interest in us; the members of their families having frequently told me that they did not deem it at all necessary to call me pastor, and send their children to the Sunday-school, as it was quite uncertain if they should remain a few weeks or even a few days longer. The number of fixed worshippers at the chapel, I should deem, has rather fallen off during the past year, though, as I before remarked, the average attendance has gratifyingly increased. I strive to content myself with simply “casting my bread upon the waters,” sowing seed by the wayside, and beside all waters, rather than think of any *visible* harvest to appear, trusting all with the Lord of the harvest. The denominations about us have been very active the past year in adding to their ranks; and diligent search made among us, and among the pupils of our Sunday-school particularly, for converts. The old cry of “heresy” has been more than once raised in reference to the denominational tenets we are *reputed* to hold, — a cry ever eagerly listened to by the more uneducated and uninformed, who are less able to exercise their reason on questions in dispute; and much effort been made, doubtless with the best intentions, to pluck us as “firebrands from the burning.”

The number of families at present in connection with the chapel, in any way, is one hundred and twelve, which is a little larger than that of the last year. I have been

gratified to find an increased interest in religion in many of the families. Many are punctual in their attendance upon public worship; but, what is better, they bear a week-day religion about with them at home and abroad. We have meetings in the vestry every Wednesday evening for religious conference and for prayer, which, though not so generally participated in as I could desire, have yet been blest, according to personal testimony, to the edification of more than one soul that has attended upon them. The way has been directly thence to an open confession of Christ; and others have their thoughts turned thither, as the work of grace is going on in their hearts. Several have joined the church during the year; and, what to me is a most pleasing feature of our communion, it consists of representatives from as many as six of the different religious denominations. Yes, thanks be to God! we know nothing of sect among us. Our chapel is free, — free to all of every religious persuasion; and almost every one has a representative there. We study to be and to keep united on other than theological grounds. The basis of our union is one of spirit. We are one body in Christ. His seamless garment is ever an emblem to us of what his church should be. Our church meetings are held every month from house to house, and are of both a social and religious character.

Our *Sewing School* for poor children was diligently kept up till the winter set in, but is now about opening again. It has not been without its beneficent results. Cheering evidences have I seen of these in many homes, over which a new aspect of comfort, economy, and industry, has been thrown. A most valuable auxiliary is the sewing-school to the Ministry at Large, and one of its efficient means of preventing pauperism. It is most grati-

fyng to see new tokens of such appreciation on the part of the Guardians of the young, in the introduction of sewing into our Primary and Grammar Schools. It is an important part of education, too long neglected.

Our *Sunday School* remains in a satisfactory condition, considering the continual removal of scholars and of teachers. Religious instruction has been given to as many as one hundred and fifty pupils during the year. The present number is about a hundred and thirty. Our anniversary in February was very fully attended, showing a lively interest, on the part of parents and neighbors, which we hope to see ever deepening. It was generally thought to be the best we ever had.

Our Teachers' Meetings continue to be held as usual once a fortnight, when the Scripture lessons are thoroughly gone over in which the classes are to be instructed on the following Sundays.

In conclusion, I would add, that I have made between twenty-three and twenty-four hundred visits with the year now ending; making quite an available capital, in the rich experience I have received, for the more successful prosecution of my work in future. And yet I feel myself but a beginner, and most humble in the thought of my many shortcomings. I pray pardon for all these, and would ask for that wisdom from above which shall be profitable to direct me and my Ministry to yet far more prosperous issues.

Respectfully,

SAMUEL B. CRUFT.

Suffolk-street, March, 1848.

MR. WINKLEY'S SECOND ANNUAL REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches.

Gentlemen, — I am happy to state, that that part of the Ministry at Large entrusted to my charge is, by the favor of the good Father, in a prosperous condition. The band of laborers connected with the chapel and with this portion of the mission, — of which band I am simply the earthly leader, — have, in their efforts to do good, been abundantly blessed. That you may know what we have done, and the results, I will attempt to show you, —

I. *Where we labor, and for whom.*

The *where* has gradually extended itself all over and beyond the city. The number of families has increased from forty to two hundred and fifty. Eighteen of these families live in Ward 6, twenty-eight in Ward 1, seventy-one in Ward 3, and ninety in Ward 5. In each of the other wards, except Ward 7, there are from one to six families. Out of the city, in East Boston there is one, in East Cambridge one, and in Chelsea two. I include under the term *families* all to whom I give a separate call, although twenty-three of these are widows and those who dwell alone. It may be asked, Why include the more distant families in your ministry? I answer: In some cases, they are constant in their attendance at the chapel; in others, a work of reformation has been commenced, which it may be important to follow up; and in others still, a hold has been gained upon their favor which bids fair to result in their permanent good. These are cases which cannot profitably be transferred. The city and its vicinity, then, is the extent of my field.

Next, *the people*. — Of the 250 families, seven only are Irish, five English, three German, one Scotch, one French, one Jew, one Pole, one African, and 230 American. My work, therefore, is peculiarly American. Even the twenty families called foreign are not foreign *families*; but the *heads* thereof only are so in reality. Of the 230 American families, though all parts of the United States are represented, yet the most are from New England towns and villages.

Of these 250 families, but eight are destitute of regular means of support; and the heads of six of these are too infirm to use them, were they at their command. By this statement, I do not mean that only eight fall short of supporting themselves, but are destitute of trades. Two hundred and forty-two have trades or regular sources of support, when business is good. One hundred and eighty are permanently employed, or at least obtain enough to be independent of assistance. Yet by far the largest portion of these 180 obtain only enough to supply their daily wants through the year. A very few, as far as I can ascertain, “lay up” any thing. For this there are obvious causes; namely, want of domestic education and principles of economy, the enormous price of rent, large families, sickness, and the like. Sixty-two, who have trades, earn less than a sufficiency. Add to these the eight without trades, and I have seventy families who need, and must receive, more or less pecuniary aid. The real wants of these I have been enabled to meet through the liberality of the Tuckerman Circle, the friends who have contributed to the Office fund, personal friends, and the sewing circle. From this statement you will readily perceive, that my mission is not only peculiarly to Americans, but to the *American poor*.

II. The *means* used for their spiritual elevation, or, as I prefer to say, their *soul's salvation*.

The first in order are *regular* calls. It is my plan to complete one round of visits in two months. As this is as seldom as I deem it important to see each family, I have determined to make no additions to my present number, though I have no doubt but that as many more very near us stand in great need of the visits of a minister. When shall we have a sufficient number of truly devoted Ministers at Large? Surely, the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," is mighty in this city. By calling once in two months upon each of these families, I made 1500 visits per annum. This could be easily done, were these the only calls to be made; but, in the second place, the demand for *occasional* calls, or calls upon the sick, the afflicted, tried, and the like, are very numerous and very important. It would be far better to pass by two regular calls than one occasional call; yet neither must be omitted. My time for regular calls is during the afternoon, and for occasional during the forenoon after eleven o'clock; but the latter have increased to such an extent, that many afternoons are entirely occupied by them. The other means of spiritual elevation are public services of the Sabbath — conference meetings on Sabbath evening — church meetings on Wednesday evening, once in two weeks — two Bible classes; one for men, which meets on Sunday noon; one for women, which meets on Thursday afternoon — conversation meetings, or, I might say, a class for religious conversation: these appoint a regular hour, and meet me *individually* as religious inquirers — the Sunday School, always a powerful auxiliary — and, lastly, certain individuals who have kindly volunteered to take charge of two or three families

each, laboring, in co-operation with myself, for the advancement of piety. These are the various means we use.

III. The *results*.

In my "regular calls," I do not seek in every case to excite an *immediate* religious interest. I find that dangerous. When once a mind and heart are really aroused, they must be carried on to permanent conversion, or evil is done instead of good. While, therefore, I do not avoid the subject of religion in any case, — while I do refer to it in almost every call, and seek by all means to prepare the way, — yet, fearing that I shall be unable to guide too many at a time, I only seek directly to awaken the interest of such a number as I can follow to a permanent position. Yet these general calls are powerful means to keep my people around me, — to win their esteem and love, without which I can do them no good, — to draw them to meeting, and finally to Christianity.

The causes of *occasional* calls are God's providences. These providences soften the heart, and call to the servant of the gospel too distinctly for him to hesitate. Be they many or few, he dare not refuse to improve them, though his lungs be exhausted from constant and earnest conversation, and his frame worn out by a succession of exciting questioners. And here, too, are generally good results. The heart draws more closely towards you, and the faithful shepherd can more confidently lead the sheep to the green pastures of a Father's love and a Saviour's sympathy.

In my public preaching, I have desired to give systematic courses of sermons on particular important doctrines, without, however, announcing that fact, or making the sermons dependent upon each other. I have preached

one course, for instance, of twelve sermons on God, in which I attempted to prove Him worthy of supreme love ; and other courses of like nature. In this way, education and spiritual nurture go hand in hand, and both enlighten and bless the people. I have no fault to find either with the attendance upon the Sunday service or the effect of the preaching. Our morning audience has become a very fair one, and on the afternoons of pleasant Sabbaths the chapel is filled. Many, who are not as yet particularly interested as Christians, talk more intelligently about Christianity, and are more ready to admit both its demands and advantages.

The conference of Sunday evening has been constantly interesting and well attended. Some evenings, even the aisles and entry have been filled. Besides the religious interest awakened and deepened in my own people, and in some who from various causes attend no other than this meeting, their effect upon the various religious denominations around us has been very excellent. All sects meet there, and forget their differences in one great subject. Some come to hear and see, who are compelled to take part and help. They are indeed delightful seasons to us all.

The church meeting, being less public, is more social. It draws the members more closely together ; and, while we sit within the circle formed in the vestry for the occasion, we find no difficulty in calling the same God, Father ; and each other, from the heart, brother and sister. We speak plain, very plain words, yet truly affectionate, and free from personality. Our church is no dead church. Its influence is being felt.

The two Bible classes referred to are intended principally for intellectual, religious culture. Ten men, with strong, common-sense minds, come into the vestry with

the children on Sunday, and meet me with their matter-of-fact, yet all-important questions. Would that I had room here to review the ground we have thoroughly gone over! The other class, meeting on Thursday afternoon, is equally profitable and interesting. Let minds be educated in these things, and skepticism, infidelity, and atheism must fly.

There are connected with the families of my flock between four and five hundred children, including those of all ages, who are at home with their parents. In our Sunday-school — I call the Howard *our* Sunday-school, as I am a teacher in it — there are 300 scholars. There are 47 teachers. This noble band is doing a mighty work, both by their teaching, their charities, and their visits. God bless that Sunday-school! Methinks many a parent and child on earth and in heaven will say Amen.

I would not omit the good results attending the labors of certain individuals, in whose piety and judgment I confide, who have each kindly taken under their charge the temporal and spiritual interests of two or three families. This does not lessen my labors, but greatly increases the permanency of my work.

Last, but not least, are my hours allotted to personal conversation with those religiously inclined. A single example will illustrate their value. A very diffident, yet intelligent, young lady came to me one morning, and, referring to my request that those should visit me who would like to inquire concerning religious truth, said, "I have no special interest in the subject of religion, but would like to determine what course wisdom dictates to a rational being concerning it." I was very happy to welcome her, and pointed out the first step which I judged she had better take. She came from that time once a week to show me the

results, and to receive an additional word, but never assented to any proposition until convinced. The moment the point was settled, she left me, assuring me that it should become the rule of her life. That young lady, after pursuing this course four months, made a public profession; and a more consistent, living Christian dwells not among us. In this same way, come to me quite a number. This number is constantly increasing. I believe it to be one of the most profitable and delightful means which I use for the permanent good of individuals. It takes time and lungs; but they are well spent. I have also a small collection of books on spiritual culture, which are doing much good. There are over fifty at this moment in circulation. They are mighty colleagues to the Christian minister. I only wish that my means would permit the more rapid collection of these powerful auxiliaries.

As might reasonably be expected, our little church — the band of Christian strugglers — has increased. Thirty-two have been added within the last eighteen months. In this number I do not include former members who have returned.

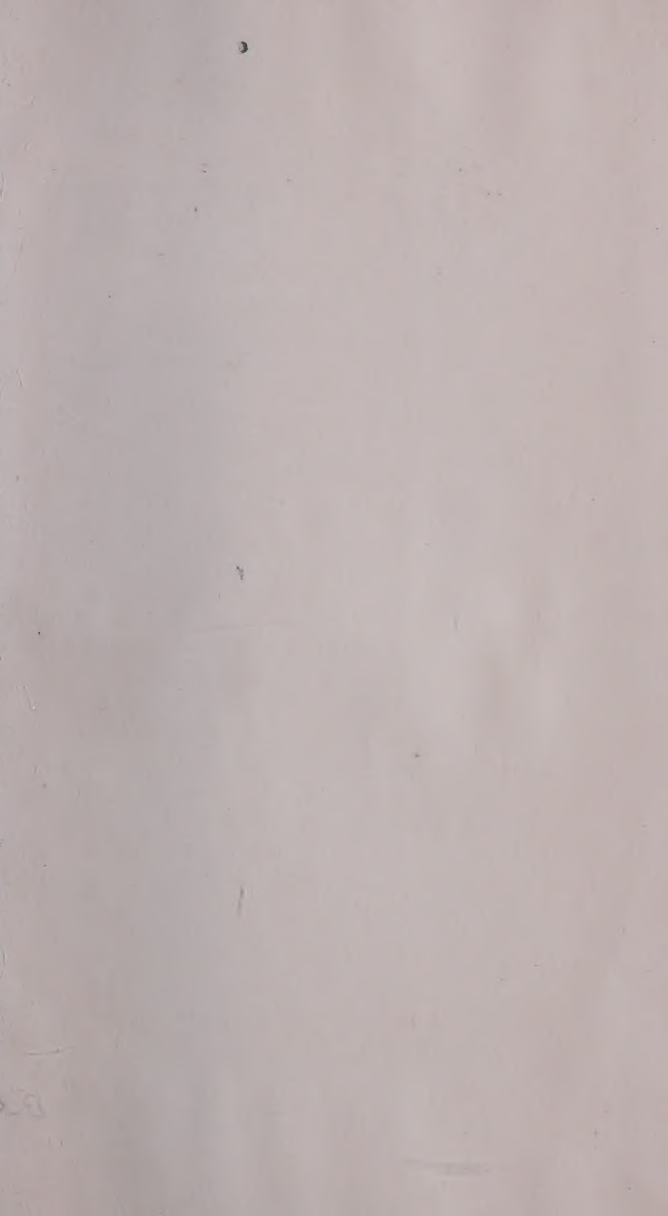
And these, gentlemen, are the results of the means used. Dared I trespass on your patience farther, I could easily treble my report. Enough has been said to furnish you with a glance at our position.

S. H. WINKLEY.

Boston, March 1, 1848.

The Executive Committee have received a Report from the Rev. Wm. Ware; but, as it is more particularly addressed to them, and discusses topics and offers suggestions especially for their consideration, it has been thought unnecessary to publish it. The Committee regret, that, in consequence of Mr. Ware's absence in Europe for the benefit of his health, the Fraternity is deprived of his valuable services. It is hoped that they may at some future time be resumed.

Not at all back S. H. W.





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